

Environmental Sustainability And Peace

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Abstract

This paper explores the interconnectedness of stability, peace, conflict, and sustainable development, highlighting the challenges of environmental factors, specifically climate change, on peace and stability. It suggests a preventive approach, focusing on governance for all and tackling climate change and environmental issues. This paper recommends policy recommendations based on some case studies.

Keywords: Conflict, Climate security, Environment Challenges, Sustainable Development, Peace

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I. Introduction

Peace is the absence of conflict, but Positive peace is essential for human rights, justice, and sustainable development. Peace involves negotiation, compromise, and cooperation between disparate factions. It is difficult, but it can be achieved through diplomacy, mediation, issue resolution, and messages. Peace is one of the essential goals of humanity and is something all individuals and society have to work for and strive towards all the time.

Sustainability and Peace is a growing area of research advocating the inclusion of environmental factors in peace-making. It means not utilizing nor is consuming more than available so that the generations who follow are not stripped of the means to fulfil their own necessities. Peace is defined as the absence of violence and the presence of justice and equality, which is closely related to this. This connection is considered more important for promoting sustainable Peace, particularly in the world's conflict-affected and environmentally challenged regions.

Peace is freedom from violent strife. It demands negotiation, compromise, and collaboration across broad and diverse groups. Essential to this is the protection of human rights, the promotion of social justice, and the realization of sustainable development. Achieving lasting Peace is challenging but can be done with appropriate and lawful means like diplomacy, mediation, and negotiation, conflict resolution, and communication.

Peace is closely interconnected with environmental sustainability. Climate change aggravates land and water competition, resulting in soil degradation, desiccated pasture lands, lower agricultural productivity, and dwindling waters.

Degradation of the environment often leads to conflict, especially in resource-scarce regions. While the prevention of conflict over dwindling resources can be addressed by managing resources effectively, building peace alongside environmental sustainability initiatives can lead to lasting peace.

This has heightened tensions between farming and herding communities in many areas. Reducing arable land and erratic water sources have intensified conflicts between agricultural and pastoral groups in several regions, like central Mali. In the dry northern region of the nation, the compounded impacts of more frequent droughts, erratic rainfall, and extensive desertification have compromised the ability of people to strategize and maintain their livelihoods.

II. Theorising Sustainability: Concept And Evolution

Sustainable development encompasses many disciplines that aim to balance economic growth, environmental conservation, and social equity to ensure sustainability and well-being. Sustainability is a new way of thinking about progress that seeks to balance resources, environmental protection, and social well-being for today and the next generations. The three pillars of sustainability — economic, environmental, and social — are sometimes referred to as ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance).

The resource geographies of green ideas faced the liberal and capitalist belief of unlimited resource extraction for monetary benefit. But sustainability has been a hard-won target. Feminist texts scrutinize every aspect of female oppression. It encourages legal and social reform to ensure that men and women enjoy the same rights and opportunities as men. Ecological Localism as the Theory of Economic Sustainability encourages self-sufficient, community-based economies at local or regional scales. Such a strategy is guided by regional food economies, community enterprises, local currencies, and other locally oriented initiatives.

Drawing from traditional approaches of critical theory, green theory highlights the fundamental significance and impact of environmental problems in political spheres, within political communities ranging from the local to global level, and approaches such problems using solutions ranging from the local to political

communities. The surmounting environmental challenges provide issues for existing practices to overcome and new questions that International Relations (IR) theory need to answer. Green theory challenges the status quo of existing political, social, and economic strategies by advocating an ethical, holistic viewpoint and a "green theory of value".

Central to eco-centrism is the importance of healthy ecosystems as a prerequisite for human health and well-being. It refuses this dichotomy between local and foreign politics, and recognizes that human populations are ecologically interdependent.

Further, the writings of Johan Galtung, Thomas Homer-Dixon, and Mary Kaldor have shaped the scholarly discourse on sustainability and Peace.

Galtung coined the term "positive peace", which includes values such as social justice, equality, and fulfillment of basic needs. It is the above and that, which can be read, among other things, in the study of the Canadian environmentalist Homer-Dixon, environmental scarcity and conflict, which shows that not conflict over natural resources but, on the contrary, non-sustainable management of natural resources plays a role in triggering conflicts.

Michael Doyle identifies economic, institutional, and ideological pillars as explanations for Peace between liberal democracies. Liberal peace theories justify some international interventions. In 1976, Galtung proposed three methods for maintaining Peace: dissociative (peacekeeping), resolution (peacemaking), and associative (peacebuilding).

Peace-building is a multifaceted process aimed at reducing the risk of conflict recurrence by strengthening the national capacity for conflict management. The UN has recognized its importance in post-conflict periods, emphasizing the need for active engagement with local parties, holding free and fair elections, reforming local police forces, and strengthening rule of law institutions. The Brahimi Report emphasized the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants as key to immediate post-conflict stability and reduced conflict recurrence. The Security Council and General Assembly have also acknowledged the importance of peacebuilding in peacekeeping operations, emphasizing active engagement with local parties, holding free and fair elections, reforming local police forces, and strengthening rule of law institutions. Inclusivity and institution-building are critical in preventing relapse into violent conflict and producing more resilient states and societies. The Security Council emphasizes a comprehensive approach to maintaining Peace, including preventing conflict outbreaks, addressing root causes, assisting parties, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction, and development. Planning instruments like the UN Peacebuilding Commission's Strategic Frameworks for Peacebuilding, the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and Integrated Strategic Frameworks (ISFs) guide peacebuilding activities in countries emerging from conflicts.

Environmental Peacebuilding theory proposes that Peace is attainable through a careful and sustainable utilization of natural resources. Joint management of shared resources (water, land, forests) can help to reduce tensions and build trust in competing sectors. This perspective emphasizes the ability of environmental collaboration to mitigate conflicts and assist in post-conflict recovery.

III. Case Studies Interlinking Peace And Sustainability

A few examples and some case studies can help us understand the multifaceted connections between sustainability and Peace.

Heightened water stress, defined as the demand for potable water surpassing supply, can incite social unrest and provoke conflicts over the necessity for freshwater, agriculture, aquaculture, and hydropower, particularly concerning trans boundary water resources—water from aquifers and lake and river basins shared by multiple nations.

Jordan has three significant challenges: water shortage, risks to food security, and the pressing necessity for a transition to renewable energy. These difficulties extend beyond environmental concerns; they significantly impact our health, economics, and overall well-being.

In Africa's Sahel region, where livelihoods are jeopardized by escalating temperatures, droughts, and floods. Warmer, drier conditions and unpredictable rainfall in the Sahel in Africa are expected to contribute to more violent conflicts between groups over few resources than before (e.g., southwest Niger River inland delta climate-conflict nexus Mopti region, Mali). This area is extremely vulnerable to climate change, with rising temperatures and erratic rainfall causing desertification, food scarcity and population migration. Reduced resources, especially amongst farmers and herders, have exacerbated violence from climate change. (Benjaminsen, et al. 2012) Decreasing arable land and erratic water sources have intensified conflicts between agricultural and pastoral groups in several regions, including central Mali. In the dry northern region of the nation, the compounded impacts of more frequent droughts, erratic rainfall, and extensive desertification have compromised the ability of people to strategize and maintain their livelihoods.

Climate change is expected to trigger events that will force 143 million people in the Global South to migrate and move by 2050. (Almulhim, A.I., Alverio, G.N., Sharifi, A. 2024)

The Global South is under threat from violent conflicts and geopolitical challenges. With the monsoon rains around the corner, an expected rise in minor marriages has been noted as many families are trying to save money to avoid another flooding incident – a rising trend in Pakistan. Rights workers say an economic crisis fuelled by climate-induced events is behind this new trend of 'Monsoon Brides', even though child marriages have gradually declined in recent years. (ETV Bharat, 2024)

Water-sharing tensions like those between India, China, and Pakistan in the Indus and Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basins. Agricultural activities and, therefore, livelihoods are greatly influenced by the climate. Therefore, the number of climate refugees is on the increase as we face the need for more water and food amid climate change.

An additional example is that South Sudan has been engaged in civil war since 1955, occasionally interrupted by peace accords. The New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) had been portrayed as an instrument of unification, but its inclusion has been invaluable. (Bedigen, 2022). As a nation with a history of civil war, South Sudan faces major challenges in achieving Peace and lasting sustainability. The country's oil and other natural resources are a source of competition as well as a potential economic growth engine. Yet, poor governance and the environmental crisis have blocked efforts to use these resources sustainably. Strengthening governance for the challenge of resource management and diversifying the economy are much-needed steps towards incorporating environmental factors into South Sudan's peace building process.

Increasing vulnerabilities in conflict-impacted regions have been compounded by climate change with catastrophic floods and damaged infrastructure. Five thousand people were killed, 3,000 missing, 44,800 fled their homes, and huge infrastructure damage occurred in Libya in September 2023 after the collapse of two dams in Darnah due to record rainfall. Employing a systematic review approach, chapters include regional climate change literature from multiple sources such as the International Organization for Migration, the African Union and IFRC explaining how flooding and droughts in Niger contributed to loss of livelihoods, land degradation, and increasing competition for arable land and food. In Nigeria, unpredictable rainfall, soil erosion and desertification led to food shortages affecting 4.4 million people and heightened tensions between farmers and herders. Severe weather worsened the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, endangering lives and humanitarian access to basic services, including in the 1,500 displacement camps and informal sites housing 2 million. (Relief Web, 2024)

The prolonged violence and environmental deterioration have undermined Afghanistan's endeavors to achieve Peace and stability. Owing to the agriculture-dependent nature of the nation, coupled with the impacts of climate change, things have worsened the poverty and conflict.

Indigenous Peoples are the worst affected and bear the brunt of the Greatest Exposure to Climate Change and Environmental Stressors in Afghanistan. There are threats to Livelihoods, High Incidence of Poverty and Food Insecurity, and Low Resilience In some parts of Afghanistan. Climate change and environmental stressors threaten livelihoods, increase poverty and food insecurity, and reduce resilience. They also fuel internal displacement and migration dynamics, aggravated by rapid urbanisation and increasing marginalisation and vulnerability of the poor, particularly women and girls.

Climate change can increase the potential for local disputes over land and water resources, and in the absence of a representative government, competition for and conflict over natural resources can amplify social and economic inequality. Achieving sustainable Peace in Afghanistan should include rehabilitating its water resources, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and addressing the environmental consequences of violence. Beyond natural dangers associated with climate change, such as droughts and floods, land and land use may also be influenced by climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. These encompass, for example, extensive renewable energy facilities and resettlement initiatives. It is essential for decision-makers to consider the implications of climate change and to evaluate the indirect risks linked to mitigation and adaptation strategies. Further research should focus on developing conflict-sensitive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Thus, climate change or climate-exacerbated conflict poses many challenges to peace-building and sustainability. The integration of sustainability in peace-building efforts faces multiple challenges. Conflicts are not single-layered and have political, economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Peace cannot only be built with hectares of forests preserved for future generations. Because war-racked locales face acute resource and balance-of-power shortages, peace-making programs seldom find sufficient materials and political will behind them. The uneven distribution of responses to climate change, which requires global cooperation in the New Climate Economy regions, prevents it from being integrated into the peace-building sector.

These fragile areas, including the Sahel, South Sudan, and Afghanistan, find it difficult to adapt and thus face a growing risk of violence, and the worsening impacts of climate change may cause additional, partly invisible suffering. Conflict-affected countries often struggle with weak governance and institutional setups,

which not only, in general, impede sustainable development processes and dividends but also prevent peace-building efforts from being effective, exacerbated by corrupt practices, political patronage systems, and limited access to key resources.

In Iraq, water scarcity, increasing heat, and dust storms significantly strain intercommunal interactions.

Heightened water stress, defined as the demand for potable water surpassing supply, can incite social unrest and provoke conflicts over the necessity for freshwater, agriculture, aquaculture, and hydropower, particularly concerning trans boundary water resources—water from aquifers and lake and river basins shared by multiple nations.

Climate change is causing conflicts and displacement due to scarce resources, particularly land and water. Tensions between farming communities and pastoralists escalate, leading to violent extremist groups exploiting grievances for recruitment and deepening instability. Women and youth are disproportionately affected, with women facing increased workloads and gender-based violence in conflict zones. Nearly 80% of Mali's population is below 35, making them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups. (United Nations Security Council. 2025,

Climate change is causing temperature increases, precipitation changes, extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and environmental impacts. It is also contributing to heat-related disorders, respiratory and allergic diseases, infectious diseases, malnutrition, and mental health disorders. Climate change is causally associated with collective violence. Public health professionals can prevent collective violence by supporting mitigation measures, promoting adaptation, and addressing risk factors like poverty and socioeconomic disparities.

Afghanistan is confronting one of the globe's most severe humanitarian and environmental crises, characterised by food insecurity, violence, instability, and climate change. Intense floods, droughts, and heatwaves have escalated across the country, heightening the dangers of crop failure, livestock malnutrition, disease in crops or animals, and pest infestations. According to climate projections, future precipitation is projected to decline further while temperatures are expected to rise, hence intensifying human and environmental concerns. Climate variables and the depletion of natural resources, compounded by political difficulties, intensified food shortages and social instability in Afghanistan. Climate-induced disasters have exacerbated hunger and child malnutrition, while diarrhoeal diseases pose a significant health threat to children (Rüttinger, L. 2016)

The conflict in Nigeria is deadlier than the one inflicted by the Boko Haram group (in terms of casualties) its battleground is the lush, fertile region that stretches across the centre of Nigeria. Clashes between the two groups have killed more than 10,000 people in the last decade, almost 4,000 of them in the last two years alone. It is between the sedentary crop farmers and the nomadic cow herders of Nigeria's middle belt, where competition over diminishing land and water resources has turned lethal in an environment of near-total impunity. (Ilo, U. J., Jonathan-Ichaver, I., & Adamolekun, Y. 2019)

In some countries like Somalia, the worst drought in 40 years adds to vulnerabilities, displacement, hunger, and grievances. The impact may include climate change destroying farmland and threatening coastal fisheries (All headlines, all reporting), which harms food production and increases hunger. As global carbon emissions keep increasing, climate change makes people to migrate, displacing many millions throughout the world. Many people are displaced and move to other places because of calamities caused by extreme weather conditions that include abnormal precipitation, prolonged droughts, desertification, environmental degradation, & sea-level rise. Climate change compounds already degraded and precarious situations faced by developing countries—impacted by conflict, poverty, food insecurity and the climate emergency.

The poorest and most vulnerable populations are the most economically and climate change-driven conditions-affected groups, as a result, creating climate change-driven social inequalities and development.

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In the context of conflict and the climate crisis, pre-existing inequalities, gender roles, and unequal access to resources mean that climate change is forcing women and girls to bear the brunt of new security risks. Shared prosperity brings hope and security, yet attaining it requires fresh pledges toward realizing shared prosperity. Climate initiatives are bringing together governments, businesses, and civil society members in a bid to accelerate the pace of climate action and make the planet healthy.

The dilemma of sustainable development provides an all-encompassing framework linking the interdependencies of environmental change, socio-economic development, and peaceful coexistence on one global race assaulting the planet. Sustainability and Peace are like two sides of the same coin, fundamentally intertwined, and creating a better world has become even more urgent with so many rapidly changing global Earth systems. Peace and sustainable development are concerned with globalization and socio-economic development processes.

Indeed, the rising trends of global change and geopolitical instability will likely require us to address the potential nexus between sustainability and Peace in an era of global change. In our perception, Peace is a wide and inclusive concept that represents more than the mere absence of war and conflict and aims for social concord and fairness (Galtung, 1969). Structural and indirect violence hold even in societies that are not under siege from conventional wars and armed conflicts, from living amicably. Peace, within the din of the sustainability-peace nexus, refers to a much broader notion, encompassing several aspects of inner Peace of the individual, peaceful mentality, spirituality, peaceful cultures of organizations and regions, and also Peace with nature and other species. This comprehensive concept of Peace consists of negative Peace—that is, the lack of armed conflict and direct violence—and positive Peace, which includes the rebuilding of relationships, as well as the development of social systems that serve its fundamental needs for other types of conflict and violence (Galtung, 1969). This idea of Peace is at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2015). The strong interconnectedness of Peace to all other SDGs means that if we do not get Peace right, we will fail on every other goal. So we ought to connect sustainability, peace, and the reality of global change. (Virji, et al., 2019)

The notion of constructive Peace, encompassing societal institutions that avert conflict, is essential for sustainability. Incorporating environmental sustainability as a fundamental aspect of positive Peace and seeing negative Peace as a facet of sustainability might yield a more holistic comprehension of their interconnection. We consider some environmental, social, economic, and institutional conditions that shape the peace-sustainability nexus—integrating Environmental Sustainability as a Pillar of Positive Peace and Negative Peace as One of the Dimensions of Sustainability. Our understanding of the peace-sustainability nexus could be strengthened by following this logic by integrating environmental sustainability as a 3rd Dimension of Positive Peace and as a 4th Dimension of Sustainability. (Simangan, & Kaneko, 2021)

These correlations, thus, remain uncertain, while existing studies have looked at the relations between positive Peace and positive/negative sustainability dimensions. However, empirical evidence is scant at all in causal linkages. That relationship is influenced by environmental, social, economic, and institutional conditions. Better clarity can be achieved by integrating environmental sustainability as a pillar of positive Peace and negative Peace as a dimension of sustainability.

Women and Sustainability

A 2025 UN Spotlight report reveals that climate change is exacerbating the social and economic pressures that contribute to heightened violence against women and girls. One study referenced in the brief indicated a 28 percent rise in femicide during heatwaves. Absent immediate intervention, climate change may be associated with one in ten instances of intimate partner violence by the century's conclusion. The repercussions will be significant. (UN Women, 2022)

Women and children are still specifically vulnerable. Climate change adversely affects maternal and new-born health, particularly when catastrophes and wars restrict access to services and healthcare. Studies demonstrate that elevated temperatures elevate the occurrence of stillbirths, while rising global temperatures facilitate the proliferation of vector-borne diseases, including malaria, dengue fever, and Zika virus.

This is why gender-sensitive approaches to climate change, Peace and security are in great demand. The climate crisis has disproportionate impacts on women and girls, who make up the majority of the worlds poor and depend on local natural resources for their livelihood. Rural women are often responsible for securing food, water, and firewood for their families, which can expose them to increased risks of gender-based violence. When extreme weather disasters strike, women and children are more likely to die than men due to limited access to information, mobility, decision-making, and resources.

Women are environmental stewards, responsible for half of the world's food production, and have learned to cope with climate change through sustainable agriculture, low-impact soil management techniques, and community-based reforestation and restoration efforts. Indigenous women have been at the forefront of environmental conservation, bringing ancestral knowledge and practices that build resilience in a changing climate.

Women also play a backbone of resilience, carrying out at least two and a half times more unpaid household and care work than men. They are often the first responders in disasters, rescuing children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and other community members. After a disaster, they care for the sick and injured, support their families, and help communities recover and rebuild. Women and girls are agents of change, driving change as consumers, workers, and political and business leaders. Investing in women as a strong force for change is crucial for a more sustainable future.

Women are at the forefront of social and environmental movements. Examples include: Waorani Indigenous leader Nemonte Nenquimo who brought a community action lawsuit to stop the sale of seven million acres of Indigenous land by Ecuador to oil companies, preventing the land from being extracted.

Many women leaders have inspired communities and collectively have transformed many lives and communities, as evidenced by the Goldman Environmental Prize, which identifies over 200 prize winners as women, recognizing up to 60% of women among winners. (One Earth)

Way Forward

The main argument is that climate change—specifically, increases in temperature and extreme rainfall—has a substantial and statistically significant effect on raising the risk of both interpersonal and intergroup conflict. This relationship is robust across different regions, time periods, and types of conflict, suggesting that climate change could have serious social consequences in the future. (Hsiang and Burke, 2014) found that extreme temperatures and precipitation correlate with increased conflict and reduced social stability.

Some critics argue that it is not only the climate but structural factors that lead to the nexus between climate and war. For example, poverty and a weak political system. Buhaug (2010) and Theisen et al. (2013) found that climate variability alone does not predict armed conflict and that structural factors such as governance and socio-economic conditions play a more significant role.

So one solution to attain peace can be to steer actors away from structural violence and to surface a collective collaborative solution (Davies, 2013), and development with positive peace outcomes. The challenge lies in the need to comprehend the enduring effects of war-induced destruction on development, so that sustainable Peace can be realized. An increasing recognition is linking sustainability to Peace as the foundation of sustainable Peace is necessary for achieving lasting global stability.

Environmental peace building, ecological security, and the peace-development nexus conceptually help fragment the entangled intersection between the environmental and the peace agenda. However, significant challenges continue to hamper progress, including the complexity of the conflicts, lack of resources, and climate impact. Addressing these challenges will require a holistic approach integrating environmental considerations into peace-building efforts, particularly in the most vulnerable regions, including the Sahel, South Sudan, and Afghanistan. (United Nations Climate Action)

The Green Climate Fund has approved a project in Jordan, the Jordan Integrated Landscape Management Initiative (JILMI), to combat climate change in the country's water-scarce and drought-prone region. The project, funded by the Green Climate Fund, the Government of Jordan, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, aims to improve water security and climate resilience for 750,000 people in the northern Jordan Valley through capacity building, climate-resilient agriculture, ecosystem restoration, and improved water management. (UNEP, 2024)

There will be enhanced mutual cooperation at regional and UN platforms amongst the countries if climate change becomes a central issue through an integrated approach to conflict resolution.

The Lima Declaration called for creativity in climate actions at all levels, sustainable land management, and the creation of regional synergies. The Lima Climate Conference marked significant milestones in the international climate process, including pledges from developed and developing countries to expand the Green Climate Fund's capital beyond its initial \$10 billion target, increased transparency and confidence-building through a Multilateral Assessment, and calls for climate change education and awareness in national development plans. (Relief Web)

Sahelian countries have declared their intention to turn the challenges of the Sahel into opportunities for a prosperous, peaceful, and sustainable future. These range from factoring climate change into UN missions in climate-fragile situations to building resilience with the communities where we work, to assisting governments as they formulate climate-sensitive policies. (UNDP, 2023)

The need of the hour is to encourage the growth of economies that depend on biodiversity by using creative and unconventional finance strategies that benefit nearby populations. Efficient management of natural resources using constitutional and local legal frameworks to carry out peacemaking initiatives will play a defining role in bringing change. Acquiring practices that are inclusive, participatory, and have a caring ethic, particularly when it comes to women, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalised groups, is important.

It is important to engage with civil society and NGOs. The international community must work together to streamline scientific knowledge systems, enabling better risk assessments and field-level policies. Foresight capabilities must be strengthened to ensure climate security concerns are included in early warning and Trans boundary conflict prevention systems. Politically, it will also entail developing ambitious climate policies and delivering on the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. The optimal outcome at multiple scales can only be achieved by integrating climate, development, and security-related actions and policies. Another example is that sustainable agriculture, water management, and community cooperation should be the top priorities of environmental peace-building in the Sahel region. At the same time, the conflict drivers are largely structural such as agricultural encroachment, political vacuum, or corruption.

Climate-Security Nexus is one of the important challenges regarding global Peace and security. This nexus needs to be integrated into geopolitical strategies, enhancing cooperation between sub-regional and regional

organizations and the United Nations, and introducing best national, regional, and global practices at the national level. Climate change and international Peace and security are closely linked; climate change can, should, and must be reverse, and global and regional instruments need to be harnessed by the international community to that effect.

Negotiators need to re-examine Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, with the objective of formulating more robust regulations for international carbon trading.

Along with strengthening local institutions and the community, the role of mediation, dialogue, and negotiation is crucial. For example, The Supporting Resilient Livelihoods, Food Security and Climate Adaptation in Yemen Joint Programme (ERRYJP III) is a three-year program funded by the European Union and the Government of Sweden. The purpose is to enhance the capacity of local institutions and communities in Yemen, particularly around infrastructure and local asset rehabilitation, community dispute resolution, and social cohesion. The initiative will run through February 2025 and is expected to benefit nearly 850,000 people.

The Jordan Water Sector Efficiency Project seeks to enhance the nation's water supply infrastructure and its capacity to manage drought in Jordan, one of the most water-scarce countries globally. An estimated 1.6 million individuals are expected to gain from enhanced water services, including several refugees, especially from Syria.

Based on the capacity-building concept, The ERRY III Joint Programme seeks to enhance the resilience of populations in Yemen's most vulnerable governorates, focusing on livelihoods, food security, and climate adaptation. ERRY III facilitates the establishment of sustainable livelihood options by improving food security, employment, community asset restoration, basic social services, agricultural value chains, gender equality, women's economic empowerment, and access to renewable energy. The ERRYJP III is implementing a bottom-up approach toward enabling rural communities to respond to local risks and emerging shocks through resiliency and self-reliance. This approach fosters community ownership, accountability, and grassroots solution development and implementation by local authorities guided by the community.

With the establishment of 49 SDCs (Sub-District Developmental Committees), Yemeni communities have become more unified, and community members have taken a sense of ownership and accountability for their communities. The health facility in the Al-Jabziya sub-district of Taiz, with a population of more than 18,000, faced numerous community conflicts. The mediation committee stepped in and handled the dispute.(UNDP, 2023)

Africa's Sahel region, where livelihoods are jeopardized by escalating temperatures, droughts, and floods, the Great Green Wall initiative has rehabilitated nearly 18 million hectares of degraded land and aims to restore 100 million hectares, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and generated 10 million jobs by 2030. The Great Green Wall initiative, initiated in 2007 by the African Union, aims to rehabilitate the Sahel region's devastated landscapes and improve the lives of millions. Executed in 22 African nations, it seeks to rejuvenate thousands of villages and trap 250 million tonnes of carbon. Over \$14 billion has been committed to this transformative endeavour. The goal is to rehabilitate 100 million hectares of damaged land, generate 10 million green jobs by 2030, and provide economic prospects for the youngest demographic, food security, climate resilience, and a new global marvel. (UN Convention to Combat Desertification)

COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, included a "Peace, Relief and Recovery" day to focus on the climate and war nexus. Key initiatives included the Baku Call on Climate Action for Peace, Relief, and Recovery to promote cooperation and finance for conflict-affected nations vulnerable to climate change. Coordination platforms like the Baku Climate and Peace Action Hub were established to facilitate collaboration. Experts also discussed climate security during a side event. A significant outcome was the agreement for developed countries to provide substantial annual funding to developing nations by 2035 to address climate change impacts, which are often more severe in conflict zones. (WHO,2024)

Great leadership is critical in ensuring the avoidance and resolution of conflicts. It needs leaders who are dedicated and bold enough to transcend partisan divides to drive our national conversation and answers toward an agenda that benefits all people. Leaders are meant to use their positions of power to obtain better outcomes for vulnerable people and show a genuine commitment to stay actively engaged over the long term.

Education plays a significant role in achieving sustainable Peace. The Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development is a non-binding document designed to adapt teaching and learning to the needs of the 21st century and to contribute to a sustainable future with lasting Peace and reaffirming human rights. (UNESCO)

Decarbonisation aims to mitigate the impacts of climate change by substantially lowering the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) released into the atmosphere. The world's carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced to achieve the global temperature targets we have set ourselves under the Paris Agreement and in the UK government. In this context, it consists of transitioning to low-carbon energy generation and decreasing dependence on fossil fuels. It incorporates renewable resources, electric vehicle usage, and emission reduction to meet net-zero emissions goals.

While preventing conflict over dwindling resources can be addressed by managing resources effectively, building peace alongside environmental sustainability initiatives can lead to lasting peace. Climate change acts as a threat multiplier. It worsens conditions that might give rise to war, especially in fragile zones like the Sahel in Africa or the Middle East. However, it also creates opportunities for cooperation, such as transboundary climate change projects or renewable energy projects. Sustainable environmental policies reduce the risks associated with competition over scarce natural resources. When integrated into successful resource-sharing arrangements, conservation efforts, and the promotion of green economies, they can help stabilize vulnerable regions, decreasing their likelihood of experiencing violent conflict. One model for attaching environmental sustainability to peace is to link SDGs with well-being, supporting environmental health and peace building, and giving prominence to international cooperation on environmental issues as a diplomatic task.

Environmental and climatic refugees may be compelled to abandon land they have inhabited for centuries. They consist of farmers, herders, fishers, and those for whom the land is vital for subsistence. These migrants go to urban areas, where they frequently establish residence in congested camps, informal settlements, and other locations lacking the infrastructure to accommodate the demands of the inhabitants. This intensifies the friction between host communities and displaced individuals. The resultant issues frequently exacerbate pre-existing challenges, including warfare, resource depletion, and political turmoil. The drought in Burkina Faso during 2022 and 2023 aggravated the armed conflict, with violence being particularly severe in regions experiencing the most arid and critical climatic circumstances.

Environmental sustainability and peace are intricately linked. Some of the measures that can be undertaken to ensure environmental sustainability and peace are proper resource management, international cooperation, digital innovations, education and empowerment (which can inspire and motivate change), tailor-made initiatives (because one size fits all does not work), promoting indigenous initiatives, political stability, enhancing economic development and building on social capital.

According to the Ground for Peace: Land Restoration for International Peace and Security report published in December 2024, community-level investments in nature-based solutions (NbS) and sustainable land management (SLM) techniques can aid in conflict resolution and social cohesion restoration.

So, to combat desertification, ecosystem loss, and climate change, as well as to promote world peace, the study underlined the importance of recovering land resources. The report's conclusion, which was based on literature reviews, case studies, semi-structured interviews, and workshops, was that the growing strain on already deteriorating resources causes regional and international disputes among groups to cascade over borders. (Report of Down to Earth 2025)

To conclude...

"It is not enough to discuss freedom, climate change, health, security, and the environment. We need widely accepted communication tools that show progress in these fields."

– José Manuel Barroso, Former President of European Commission

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