

# Advancing Gender, Climate, and Security in the UN Security Council: A Blueprint for Action

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Climate change is widely considered a threat multiplier that can exacerbate drivers of state fragility and amplify security risks with stark gendered impacts. While UN Member States increasingly acknowledge these linkages, global policy responses remain fragmented. Despite more than 70 UN Security Council resolutions and statements highlighting climate-related security risks, efforts to make climate change a standing item on the Security Council's agenda have failed. Related frameworks like the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda have been slow to integrate climate considerations into thematic resolutions and country-specific National Action Plans (NAPs). To address the urgency of the climate crisis and its gendered security risks, Member States must rapidly scale-up efforts to bridge policy silos. This report examines effective strategies and promising entry points for integrating gender-responsive climate considerations into global peace and security efforts. It also presents a Blueprint for Action with 12 targeted recommendations for the Security Council, Member States, and international actors to drive progress on these interconnected challenges.

## The Gender-Climate-Security Nexus

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a “threat multiplier” that can exacerbate drivers of state fragility and amplify security risks at all stages of conflict.<sup>1</sup> Changing weather patterns like extreme heat and rising sea levels can heighten food, water, and livelihood insecurity, which fuel social tensions and volatility that often lead to conflict.<sup>2</sup> Concurrently, conflict and instability constrain the ability of states and communities to absorb, cope with, and respond to climate impacts and shocks.<sup>3</sup> These dynamics have both immediate and long-term consequences for international peace and security.<sup>4</sup>

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Climate change affects everyone, but not equally. Pre-existing societal inequalities—such as unequal access to land and natural resources, climate finance, technology, and mobility—limit women’s ability to respond to climate change impacts.<sup>5</sup> This is especially true where traditional gender norms shape societal roles and amplify patterns of discrimination.<sup>6</sup> For example, women perform 3.2 times more unpaid care work than men globally, including securing water and fuel for their households.<sup>7</sup> Yet, resource scarcity due to climate change often forces women to travel farther for water, consuming more time and increasing their exposure to gender-based violence. The same structural inequalities that increase women’s vulnerability to climate risks can also exclude them from meaningfully

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participating in male-dominated decision-making processes, which reinforces their marginalization in climate and conflict interventions.

Women and girls are not solely victims of climate security threats but are on the frontlines as agents of change. In many communities, women are uniquely positioned to build resilience and contribute to natural resource management, climate adaptation, conflict mitigation, and environmental peacebuilding.<sup>8</sup> Women at the grassroots level have pioneered innovative solutions to mitigate climate-induced displacement and enhance local adaptive capacity to address loss and damage.<sup>9</sup> Research on the link between gender equality and climate security is clear: governments with more women represented tend to adopt more robust climate change mitigation policies<sup>10</sup> and countries where women hold higher status tend to be more resilient to climate change.<sup>11</sup>

## **Linking Climate Change and the WPS Agenda**

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Given the well-established connections among the ‘triple nexus’ of gender, climate, and security, climate considerations need to be a priority within the UN’s peace and security architecture, starting with the WPS Agenda.<sup>12</sup> Nearly 25 years ago, the WPS Agenda was established by the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which was the first to recognize women as essential actors for peace and security. UNSCR 1325 created a global policy architecture that has since expanded to include 10 thematic resolutions, organized around four key pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.<sup>13</sup> This framework provides a crucial opportunity to advance inclusive climate action and bolster women’s meaningful participation in climate-resilient solutions.

While the WPS Agenda has made significant progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective into peace and security policies, the integration of climate considerations has lagged. In 2015, the Security Council established the first formal link between climate change and the WPS Agenda with the adoption of UNSCR 2242 (2015), framing climate change as part of an evolving global security context alongside health pandemics and transnational terrorism.<sup>14</sup> The resolution committed the Council to addressing WPS as a cross-cutting issue in its thematic areas of work, including those influenced

by climate change. It also established a precedent for incorporating climate considerations into the Secretary-General's annual WPS reports, UN peacekeeping mandates, and country-specific NAPs.<sup>15</sup> Yet, there remains unrealized potential for addressing climate security within the architecture of the WPS Agenda and across the UN's policies and practices.

## Addressing Climate Risks in the UN Security Council

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Despite growing recognition of climate change as a driver of insecurity, the Security Council has resisted directly addressing climate security threats.<sup>16</sup> The issue was first raised in 2007 at the request of the United Kingdom, leading to the UN Secretary-General's inaugural report on climate change and its security implications.<sup>17</sup> Since then, several Member States and civil society groups have advocated for the formal integration of climate change into the Council's mandate, including through Secretary-General António Guterres' *New Agenda for Peace*.<sup>18</sup> However, geopolitical disputes and ongoing debates over the Council's role as an international security body have stalled progress.<sup>19</sup>

Some critics argue that "securitizing" climate change would neglect other dimensions of the climate crisis, such as socio-economic development or environmental protection.<sup>20</sup> Others contend that the causal link between climate change and conflict is inconclusive, and therefore, specialized bodies like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are better suited to lead on climate action. Yet, these perspectives eschew the mounting evidence that climate change exacerbates resource scarcity and insecurity with disproportionate impacts on women and girls, particularly in fragile contexts where the Security Council is engaged.<sup>21</sup>

Efforts to formally integrate climate change into the Security Council's mandate suffered a significant setback in December 2021, when Russia vetoed a sweeping resolution to define climate change as a threat to international peace and security.<sup>22</sup> Political opposition halted years of advocacy toward official recognition and prevented the Council from leveraging its unique authority to tackle climate-related security risks. As a result, climate change efforts remain siloed across UN entities, which hinders inclusive and effective action.

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## A Blueprint for Action

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The interconnected challenges of climate change, gender inequality, and global insecurity demand urgent, integrated action. The following section outlines 12 priority areas for action with specific recommendations for the Security Council and other key stakeholders to advance these efforts.

### **Leverage the Security Council Presidency to elevate links between WPS and climate change**

Despite roadblocks to formally expanding the Security Council’s mandate, there are concrete opportunities to address gender and climate change as collective security priorities. First, the President of the Security Council can play a pivotal role by approving the provisional agenda, requesting expert briefings and multi-stakeholder dialogues, and systematically integrating gender and climate perspectives into broader security discussions. In 2011, the German Presidency first brought climate security to the forefront of the UN agenda by holding an open debate on the security implications of climate change.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, during its 2024 presidency, the United Arab Emirates led a ministerial-level debate on climate change, peace, and security.<sup>24</sup> Building on these models, future presidencies could organize signature events, such as an ‘Open Debate on Gender and Climate Security’ or a high-level meeting on ‘Women’s Leadership in Addressing Climate-Related

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members to engage individuals, organizations, or institutions on relevant topics.<sup>28</sup> Going forward, Member States should advocate for including gender and climate analyses as cross-cutting themes in Security Council briefings and regularly consult experts to shape evidence-based outcomes. Even without a thematic resolution, embedding a gender and climate lens into Council matters will signal their importance for global peace and security.

Security Risks in Conflict-Affected Regions.’ These initiatives would enhance Member States’ understanding of and commitment to addressing the gender-climate-security nexus.

Second, Member States can sustain momentum by emphasizing the interconnections between gender, climate, and security in all related Council debates, meetings, and resolutions. Several states have noted these linkages in debates on climate change and food insecurity,<sup>25</sup> sea level rise,<sup>26</sup> and terrorist recruitment.<sup>27</sup> Others have referenced the climate-security relationship in Arria-formula meetings—informal convenings initiated by Council

## **Establish regular Security Council briefings led by women from climate-vulnerable and conflict-affected regions**

The Security Council should institutionalize regular briefings with women from climate-vulnerable and conflict-affected regions to ensure decisions reflect the needs and perspectives of those most directly impacted. With the adoption of UNSCR 2242 in 2015, the Council first committed to inviting women civil society briefers to thematic and country-specific discussions.<sup>29</sup> Inclusive consultations are crucial for breaking down policy silos, as these briefers often raise issues that might otherwise be overlooked. Moreover, elevating women's diverse voices—including peacebuilders, human rights defenders, civil society activists, and youth leaders—helps ground high-level policy decisions in local knowledge and lived experiences.

For women's participation to be truly meaningful, their recommendations must influence outcomes. Yet, in 2019, only one percent of the Council's deliberations on country-specific situations referenced women's inclusion in peace and security processes, despite nearly all women civil society briefers calling attention to the issue.<sup>30</sup> To move beyond a box-checking exercise, the Council should amplify women's recommendations, track their integration into decisions, and establish follow-up mechanisms.

Additionally, Member States must create an enabling environment for women's participation, particularly at the grassroots level. This includes safeguarding women briefers against harassment, intimidation, or retaliation, offering financial and logistical support, and utilizing virtual technologies to reduce barriers to participation. These measures will help ensure women's frontline experiences are heard and meaningfully acted upon.

## **Learn from past successes to influence the Security Council's priorities**

Key lessons for institutionalizing climate change as a thematic priority in the Security Council can be drawn from efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), which has become a central concern across the UN's broader peace and security framework.<sup>31</sup>

The scourge of CRSV in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Balkans in the 1990s galvanized a women-led movement that culminated in the adoption of UNSCR 1325, which made the protection of women and girls from CRSV a core pillar. Subsequent pressure from civil society and supportive Member States succeeded in framing CRSV as a direct threat to international peace and security.<sup>32</sup> In response to the new urgency to address CRSV, the Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1888 (2009), creating an integrated protection and response architecture to coordinate action against sexual violence across the UN system. Since then, four additional resolutions have

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been specifically dedicated to CRSV, including the creation of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the deployment of Women Protection Advisors, and mandates to protect civilians in peacekeeping operations.<sup>33</sup> Notably, CRSV evolved from being seen as an inevitable byproduct of war to a priority security concern that impedes sustainable peace and post-conflict recovery.

Just as CRSV gained recognition through a coordinated strategy of civil society mobilization, Member State leadership, and integrated policy reform, climate advocates should adopt similar approaches to elevate climate change as a collective security priority. These lessons demonstrate the need to frame climate change as a multiplier of conflict and insecurity that demands robust and coordinated action within the UN's framework. To that end, policymakers should push for an integrated climate security architecture within the UN system, making clear that climate change impacts are fundamental to both the WPS Agenda and the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security.

### **Mainstream climate change considerations in WPS thematic resolutions**

To effectively integrate a climate security lens into the UN's policies and institutions, the Security Council can start by mainstreaming climate considerations in the WPS Agenda and its thematic resolutions. Nearly a decade after UNSCR 2242 first acknowledged climate change in the WPS framework, it remains the only resolution to do so, despite the evolving security landscape and references in the Secretary-General's reports.<sup>34</sup> Future resolutions under the WPS Agenda should reaffirm UNSCR 2242's reference to climate change threats and expand on its cursory language to position climate change as a WPS priority across all four pillars. New policies should also include a dedicated section on climate security risks and reinforce women's meaningful participation in climate-responsive action and decision-making at all levels.

Looking ahead to the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in October 2025, which also marks 15 years since UNSCR 2242, Member States could seize the opportunity to propose a new resolution addressing climate change as a driver of conflict and instability under the WPS Agenda. This resolution should articulate why climate change is a security issue, underscore its gender-differentiated impacts, and emphasize women's critical roles in advancing effective solutions.

Given the strong institutional backing of UNSCR 1325, a climate-focused resolution under the WPS framework may be more attainable than a broader resolution defining climate change as a global peace and security threat. The caucus of WPS champions in the Security Council—the 11 Council members that have endorsed the Shared Commitments on WPS—could play a key role in mobilizing support for such a resolution.<sup>35</sup> Success would also depend on building coalitions among non-permanent members to secure the required nine affirmative votes while avoiding opposition from veto-wielding permanent members.

## **Strengthen climate change integration in the Secretary-General’s annual reports on WPS**

The Secretary-General’s annual reports on WPS offer a concrete opportunity to incorporate climate-related security issues into UN review processes. After UNSCR 2242 first recognized the connections between climate security and WPS in 2015, subsequent annual reports of the Secretary-General only made cursory references to climate change as an emerging peace and security threat. In 2020, however, the report broke new ground by dedicating a section to “Climate change and its peace and security implications” under the “Building and sustaining peace” pillar and called for integrating the nexus into UN policymaking.<sup>36</sup> Since then, subsequent reports have become an important tool for monitoring the interlinkages between gender equality, climate resilience, and peace outcomes.

Since the Secretary-General’s annual reports are informed by inputs from Member States, UN entities, regional organizations, and civil society, national policymakers should use their submissions to emphasize country-specific climate security threats and opportunities. Documenting persistent challenges and lessons learned across conflict settings will contribute to building a robust evidence base and filling critical knowledge gaps on the triple nexus. Additionally, highlighting successful practices and scalable approaches is key to supporting women’s leadership in addressing those interlinked crises.

### **Utilize WPS NAPs for climate-responsive action**

WPS NAPs offer strategic entry points to advance inclusive climate action within country-specific activities and implementation. NAPs provide a roadmap for how Member States fund, implement, and monitor their WPS commitments. While the overall share of NAPs that include a reference to climate change has increased, only 28.4 percent have included any reference to climate change

since Denmark developed the first plan in 2005.<sup>37</sup> Of those references, the quality of climate integration has been uneven, with the majority of climate mentions appearing in background sections without corresponding activities or indicators for implementation.<sup>38</sup>

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Future NAPs should mainstream climate change considerations across all four WPS pillars—participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery—and set clear goals, measurable targets, and budget allocations that support implementation. NAP renewal processes offer a crucial opportunity to embed new climate change considerations and to reframe existing narrative references that solely position women as climate victims. As new plans are developed, greater emphasis should be placed on women’s agency and leadership in confronting climate-related security threats, along with concrete activities to deliver impactful results.



## **Embed gender and climate-related security considerations within the UN’s country-specific resolutions and peacekeeping mandates**

Another avenue to advance climate security alongside the WPS Agenda is to integrate both issues into the UN’s broader response to conflict situations. Climate change directly affects the security situation in many countries that frequently appear on the Security Council’s agenda, including Sudan, Afghanistan, Mali, Yemen, and Myanmar.<sup>39</sup> Even if Member States cannot agree to formally put climate on the Council’s standing agenda, embedding gender and climate-related security risks in country-specific reports, operational plans, and field interventions can help drive coordinated action. While the Security Council has recognized climate and ecological risks in resolutions related to West Africa and the Sahel, Somalia, Darfur, and the Lake Chad Basin, these resolutions failed to explicitly connect climate risks to their gendered dimensions, missing a critical opportunity to address the triple nexus.<sup>40</sup> Moving forward, country-specific reports prepared for the Council should include an analysis of gender and climate-related security risks as a standard practice.

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UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions should also incorporate provisions linking gender and climate-related risks in their mandates. This integration is key to enhancing both the operational effectiveness of field missions and tactical efforts to protect civilians. A notable example is UNSCR 2625 (2022), which renewed the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and became the first to require the Mission to conduct “gender-sensitive risk assessments on the adverse effects of climate change.”<sup>41</sup> This provision was retained in the 2023 and 2024 mandate renewals, which emphasized the detrimental impacts of climate change on South Sudan’s “humanitarian situation and stability” that directly affected the mission’s operating environment.<sup>42</sup> Given the significant number of UN missions in climate-vulnerable areas, future mandates should adopt this approach, ensuring that all peace operations assess, monitor, and report on the gendered dimensions of climate change in their planning and activities.

## **Create shared language and standardized guidance to build capacity and operationalize the gender-climate-security nexus**

Moving from policy commitments to implementation requires a greater understanding of how to operationalize the triple nexus. As a relatively new agenda, the gender-climate-security discourse has yet to develop a shared language for addressing the overlapping effects of climate change on gender and security risks and how stakeholders across sectors should respond.

Guidance on gendered climate security risks must be accessible to practitioners across a wide range of sectors, from peace operations and embassy personnel to local partners involved in natural resource management, agricultural production, and migration. Developing specialized training



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## **UN actors should develop integrated analytical products that enhance understanding of the gender-climate-security nexus.**

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instructions for how to integrate climate change considerations into different geopolitical contexts.<sup>43</sup> Likewise, UN actors should develop integrated analytical products that enhance understanding of the gender-climate-security nexus, address knowledge gaps, and contextualize programs across the political, socio-economic, and demographic environments in which they operate.

### **Integrate climate security into conflict prevention frameworks and analytical tools**

While the Security Council primarily addresses deteriorating security situations, its mandate also includes conflict prevention, which presents a clear entry point for advancing both WPS and climate security. However, climate security considerations have not yet been fully integrated into existing conflict prevention policies and analytical tools. This gap is partly due to limitations on technical capacity, deficits in real-time data for assessing climate-driven security threats, and a general lack of awareness about the gendered security impacts of climate change.<sup>44</sup>

Despite these challenges, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Sixth Assessment Report acknowledges that climate action can offer new pathways to advance peace and stability in conflict-affected areas that are also vulnerable to climate impacts.<sup>45</sup> For instance, in the Sahel, where desertification and water scarcity intensify tensions between herders and farmers, incorporating climate and gender variables into early warning systems could yield valuable insights into potential conflict hotspots. Since climate change also tends to exacerbate instability through indirect impacts on human security, particularly for women and girls—including resource scarcity, loss of livelihoods, weakened agricultural production, and forced displacement—monitoring these risk factors with a gender lens is key to effective conflict prevention.<sup>46</sup>

To advance these efforts, UN actors and Member States should integrate gender-responsive climate-related analysis into existing conflict prevention frameworks. For example, the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) 2024 Framework for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Europe and Central Asia includes climate-induced security risks as root causes of conflict and emphasizes climate security as a core entry point for prevention.<sup>47</sup> Additionally,

modules, tailored tools, and context-specific resources will better equip UN personnel, humanitarian actors, and other stakeholders to implement gender-responsive climate strategies. For example, the U.S. government has created one-page talking points for embassies and bureaus with specific

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## **UN agencies should strengthen their capacity to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated climate data, which can inform prevention and early warning systems.**

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UN agencies should strengthen their capacity to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated climate data, which can inform prevention and early warning systems. Engaging closely with civil society, mission personnel, and other gender-diverse stakeholders will ensure these models are inclusive, intersectional, and responsive to the unique challenges posed by climate change.

### **Mobilize multi-stakeholder partnerships for evidence-based and integrated approaches**

The UN and relevant agencies should utilize existing capacities to provide evidence-based analysis for climate-responsive conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Initiatives like the Climate Security Mechanism (CSM)—a joint effort of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO), and UNDP—play an important role in building the capacity of UN actors to better address the linkages between climate change and peace and security outcomes.<sup>48</sup> Moving forward, the Security Council should leverage the CSM to deepen its knowledge base and inform its climate-related deliberations, including by requesting country-specific briefings on gendered and climate-related security threats. Sustained resourcing for the CSM, coupled with increased collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Women, and the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security, can help to bring these agendas together.

The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) also play important roles in coordinating integrated responses to peace efforts across the UN's human rights, development, peacebuilding, and humanitarian pillars. For example, the PBF has been instrumental in preventing the outbreak of climate-related conflict in Yemen by promoting women's involvement in local water management and community dispute resolution systems.<sup>49</sup> In partnership with the CSM, Member States should leverage the PBF and PCB to better align inclusive climate action with peacebuilding efforts. This can be achieved by holding joint briefings, facilitating knowledge-exchange consultations, and coordinating information-sharing across related initiatives.

### **Promote women's meaningful inclusion in climate action, conflict mediation, and peacebuilding**

Women's leadership in local-level climate adaptation and natural resource-related management is critical to effective conflict mitigation and environmental peacebuilding. Especially at the local level, women often serve as key mediators in resource disputes, bringing together conflicting parties and facilitating dialogue within their families and communities.<sup>50</sup> For example, women in Kenya's pastoralist communities were instrumental in averting planned attacks over natural resource disputes, including by forming a Women Peace Council to foster community dialogue.<sup>51</sup> Women mediators also bring in the voices of traditionally marginalized groups in conflict resolution processes, which contributes to more sustainable solutions that address the needs of diverse community members.<sup>52</sup>

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## **International donors should prioritize funding for climate-responsive projects that center women in leadership and decision-making roles,**

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There is a unique opportunity to leverage Member States' commitment to the WPS Agenda to promote inclusive climate action and peace efforts. International donors should prioritize funding for climate-responsive projects that center women in leadership and decision-making roles, especially in natural resource management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. Supporting local women-led climate and peace initiatives can be

a powerful way to deliver community-driven interventions that address priority needs. Additionally, investing in training programs and capacity-building to strengthen women's conflict resolution and negotiation skills can enhance their contributions to climate-related peacebuilding efforts.<sup>53</sup> These measures not only advance WPS priorities but also foster community resilience and preparedness in confronting climate-related shocks.

## **Harness regional alliances to accelerate WPS and climate integration**

Regional alliances offer significant opportunities to advance gender-responsive approaches to climate and security challenges, complementing efforts within the UN system. While global security actors have historically focused on hard security threats and military defense, there is a growing push to address emerging non-traditional threats and human security in their strategies and operations.

NATO has made notable strides in embedding gender and climate considerations across its civilian and military policy frameworks. Since adopting its first WPS policy in 2007, NATO has developed a robust infrastructure that includes a Special Representative for WPS, Gender Advisors, Gender Focal Points, a WPS Leadership Task Force and Technical Task Force, and a Committee on Gender Perspectives.<sup>54</sup> These efforts were further reinforced when NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept established a guiding principle to "integrate climate change, human security, and the Women, Peace and Security agenda" across all operations, signaling a recognition of the interconnected nature of these challenges.<sup>55</sup>

NATO leadership endorsed a revised WPS policy in 2024 that establishes a cross-cutting framework to promote WPS across the Alliance's core tasks. For the first time, this policy acknowledged the "compounding impacts" of climate change, conflict, and inequality of women and girls, emphasizing their broader security implications.<sup>56</sup> Looking ahead, new initiatives like NATO's Agenda on Climate Change and Security and its Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence present key opportunities to more comprehensively integrate gender considerations and drive dedicated efforts at the intersection of gender and climate security.

Other regional alliances, including the African Union (AU), have taken similar steps to align climate action with peace and security initiatives. Gendered climate vulnerabilities are particularly acute in Africa, as women account for 90 percent of the agricultural workforce in many countries and are disproportionately affected by environmental impacts.<sup>57</sup> Recognizing these challenges, the AU adopted a Common African Position in 2022 to integrate gender equality into its climate action agenda, calling for stronger intergovernmental coordination and joint strategies between gender and environment ministries. The AU is also developing a comprehensive Common African Position on Climate, Peace, and Security (CAP-CPS), which focuses on improving governance by strengthening climate-security capacities and fostering inclusivity, particularly for marginalized groups.<sup>58</sup> With attention to differentiated vulnerabilities as a core priority, the CAP-CPS presents a clear opportunity to integrate the AU’s WPS commitments as the framework evolves.

The European Union (EU) has also recognized gender and climate security as integral to its broader commitments to peace, security, and development. In 2023, the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy adopted a Joint Communication on the climate-security nexus, which integrated gender considerations across its policies. For

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## **Leveraging regional WPS mechanisms can help catalyze multilateral action on climate-related security risks.**

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instance, it called for EU peacebuilding initiatives and stabilization assessments to “incorporate climate and environmental considerations in their response options in an inclusive, gender and conflict sensitive approach.”<sup>59</sup> This aligns with the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2024), which stresses the need to adopt a gender perspective when addressing climate-security risks and underscores the critical role of women’s leadership in climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. The Action Plan also outlined specific activities to address the gendered impacts of climate change with indicators to monitor progress.<sup>60</sup> Leveraging these regional WPS mechanisms can help catalyze multilateral action on climate-related security risks.

## Conclusion and the Path Forward

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The inextricable links between climate change, gender inequalities, and sustainable peace and security can no longer be overlooked. Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, intensifies resource competition, and drives displacement, all of which disproportionately impact women and girls in conflict-affected and climate-vulnerable regions. At the same time, women remain underrepresented in decision-making processes related to climate action, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding despite their leadership on the frontlines.

Policymakers are increasingly recognizing the synergies between advancing the WPS Agenda and addressing the climate crisis. Integrating gender perspectives into climate resilience and peacebuilding efforts strengthens holistic responses while understanding climate-related security risks enables more effective conflict prevention and peace interventions.

This report calls for concrete steps to elevate the gender-climate-security nexus across UN processes, strengthen women's leadership in climate action and peacebuilding, and build institutional capacity for more effective responses to emerging climate-related security risks. It offers a roadmap for the Security Council, Member States, and international actors to advance integrated and inclusive approaches:

### **1. Leverage the Security Council Presidency to elevate links between WPS and climate change**

- Host thematic debates and high-level meetings to elevate WPS and climate change on the Security Council's agenda. Future presidencies should hold an 'Open Debate on Gender and Climate Security' and a high-level meeting on 'Women's Leadership in Addressing Climate-Related Security Risks in Conflict-Affected Regions' to deepen understanding and awareness of the gender-climate-security nexus.
- Facilitate regular, interactive consultations with gender and climate experts to break down professional silos and integrate their perspectives into the Council's broader security agenda. Arria-formula meetings could also provide a platform for frontline women leaders and civil society experts to brief the Council on the escalating security threats posed by climate change.
- Request the inclusion of gender and climate analyses as cross-cutting themes in all related Security Council discussions to ensure their linkages feature prominently in new resolutions, statements, sanctions, and other policy outputs.

### **2. Establish regular Security Council briefings led by women from climate-vulnerable and conflict-affected regions**

- Institutionalize regular briefings with women civil society leaders from diverse backgrounds to inform Security Council processes and ground decision-making in frontline experiences. Follow-up mechanisms should be implemented to translate women's recommendations and priorities into policy outcomes, moving beyond token inclusion to meaningful impact.

- Create an enabling environment for women’s inclusion in high-level UN processes. This includes protecting against harassment and intimidation, providing financial and logistical support, and utilizing virtual technologies to reduce barriers to participation.

### **3. Learn from past successes to influence the Security Council’s priorities**

- Coordinate advocacy efforts to position climate change as a collective security priority. Drawing lessons from the successful mobilization around CRSV within the Security Council, advocates should employ a similar strategy to frame climate change as a multiplier of conflict and insecurity that demands robust and integrated action within the UN’s peace and security framework.
- Establish an integrated climate security architecture within the UN system. Building on the UN’s system-wide approach to CRSV at both headquarters and country levels, the Security Council should lead efforts to develop a coordinated, multi-level response to climate-related security risks.

### **4. Mainstream climate change considerations in WPS thematic resolutions**

- Integrate climate considerations into all future WPS thematic resolutions, including a dedicated section on climate-related security risks and specific calls to promote women’s meaningful participation in climate action and decision-making at all levels.
- Propose a new climate-focused WPS resolution alongside the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 that addresses climate change as a key driver of conflict and emphasizes women’s vital roles in effective solutions. Success will depend on garnering support from permanent and non-permanent Security Council members and navigating opposition from veto-wielding states.

### **5. Strengthen climate change integration in the Secretary-General’s annual reports on WPS**

- Utilize Member States’ national reporting processes to incorporate country-specific climate considerations into the Secretary-General’s annual WPS reports. Highlighting climate-related security risks and opportunities, persistent challenges, and successful practices that showcase women’s leadership at this level will help build the knowledge base and advance action on the nexus.

### **6. Utilize WPS NAPs for climate-responsive action**

- Mainstream climate change considerations in future WPS NAPs across all four pillars— participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery—and move beyond cursory references in background sections.
- Use NAP renewal processes to integrate climate change as a cross-cutting theme with specific and measurable indicators for implementation and promote the role of women in addressing climate-security threats.

## **7. Embed gender and climate-related security considerations within the UN's country-specific resolutions and peacekeeping mandates**

- Include a comprehensive analysis of gender and climate-related security risks in country-specific reports, operational plans, and Security Council resolutions as a standard practice.
- Systematically incorporate gender and climate-specific language into the mandates of UN peacekeeping operations and special political mandates, with requirements to assess and report on climate considerations in countries where the Security Council is actively engaged. Mandating gender-sensitive risk assessments that consider the destabilizing impacts of climate change can improve operational effectiveness, enhance the protection of civilians, and better inform mission strategies, operations, and tactical activities.

## **8. Create shared language and standardized guidance to build capacity and operationalize the gender-climate-security nexus**

- Ensure guidance on gendered climate security risks is accessible to practitioners across diverse sectors, from peace operations and embassy personnel to local partners engaged in natural resource management, agricultural production, and migration.
- Develop specialized training modules, tailored tools, and context-specific resources to better equip UN personnel, humanitarian actors, and other stakeholders to implement gender-responsive climate strategies. UN actors should support new integrated analytical products that promote an understanding of the gender-climate-security nexus, address knowledge gaps, and contextualize programs across political, socio-economic, and demographic operating environments.

## **9. Integrate climate security into conflict prevention frameworks and analytical tools**

- Incorporate climate-related and gender-responsive risk factors—such as desertification, water scarcity, resource competition, and displacement—into conflict prevention and early warning systems to more effectively detect and forecast emerging security threats.
- Strengthen the UN's analytical capacity to assess climate-driven threats and collect and analyze real-time, gender-disaggregated data on climate-conflict dynamics. UN actors should engage closely with civil society, mission personnel, and gender-diverse stakeholders to ensure new models are inclusive and intersectional.

## **10. Mobilize multi-stakeholder partnerships for evidence-based and integrated approaches**

- Leverage existing capacities and foster interagency cooperation between the Climate Security Mechanism, the Peacebuilding Commission, and UN Women, among other offices, to systematically integrate gender and climate-related security risks in the UN's peacebuilding policies and interventions.
- Request country-specific briefings for the Security Council, facilitate knowledge exchange consultations, and coordinate information sharing across UN mechanisms to build internal capacity and improve responses to gender-climate-security threats.



## **11. Promote women’s meaningful inclusion in climate action, conflict mediation, and peacebuilding**

- Reinforce women’s meaningful inclusion in conflict prevention, community-level mediation, and peace negotiations, particularly in decision-making related to natural resource management and governance in climate-vulnerable areas.
- Fund and support local women-led initiatives to strengthen peace and security outcomes and advance climate action. Investing in training, leadership opportunities, and capacity-building programs on conflict resolution and negotiation will amplify women’s roles as environmental peacebuilders and build community resilience to confront climate-related shocks.

## **12. Harness regional alliances to accelerate WPS and climate integration**

- Pursue dedicated efforts on gender and climate security within regional alliances and policy frameworks. Regional security bodies offer alternative entry points to embed a gender-climate perspective into new strategic initiatives, such as NATO’s Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence, the African Union’s Position on Climate, Peace, and Security (CAP-CPS), and the next iteration of the EU’s Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.
- Facilitate cross-sectoral and regional knowledge-sharing among Member States, gender and environment ministries, and local women-led organizations to share best practices and scale gender-responsive climate security action.

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