



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

The role of conflict-sensitive natural resource management approaches

Webinar - 23 January 2018

SUMMARY POINTS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Speakers:

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Sarah Gibbons, *Chief of Party, PEACE III programme, Pact Kenya*

Julius Jackson, *Technical Officer (Protracted Crises), FAO*

Moderator:

Julius Jackson, *Technical Officer (Protracted Crises), FAO*

Background

This first webinar on sustaining peace was presented as part of a series of webinars organized by **KORE** - the Knowledge sharing platform on resilience- within the INFORMED programme and dedicated to sharing knowledge on resilience building. This series of webinars is the result of a collaboration between EU-DEVCO and FAO strategic programme on resilience.

Introduction

Interventions supporting food security and nutrition play a critical role in protecting and saving lives and livelihoods and in strengthening resilience in conflict-affected situations. However, interventions supporting livelihoods, particularly those focused on natural resource management, can also play an important role in sustaining peace and in directly preventing conflict, through a number of different pathways.

Some of these pathways are explored in the 2017 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report on '[Building Resilience for Peace and Food Security](#)', and are referenced in the [2015 CFS Framework For Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises \(CFS-FFA\)](#).

This webinar examined the linkages between **natural resource management (NRM)**, investment in **resilient agricultural livelihoods** and contributions to **peacebuilding** and **sustaining peace**. It explored how conflict-sensitive approaches to natural resource access and use can make contribution to sustaining peace, and how investments in building resilience can help reduce specific conflict drivers. The event drew on and be illustrated by examples from:

1. SIPRI's perspectives on climate security and management of natural resource conflicts, focusing on laying the foundations for socially, economically and politically resilient peace;
2. Mercy Corps/pact's experience on natural resource sharing agreements between the [Dodoth and Turkana in Uganda](#) to strengthen communities' capacities to manage interethnic conflicts; and
3. FAO's work on natural resource access and use between *Misseriya* and *Dinka Ngok* communities through a multi-sector livelihood project in the contested [Abyei Administrative Area \(AAA\)](#).

Summary points

1. NRM in fragile and conflict-affected states: risks and opportunities

Presented by Florian Krampe, Researcher, SIPRI's Climate Change and Risk Project, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

This presentation explored the risks and opportunities for NRM in fragile and conflict-affected states. Building peace in fragile and conflict-affected states is rarely if ever straightforward, and climate and environmental changes are exacerbating already complicated situations. It is increasingly evident that the interaction among social, political and ecological processes decisively shape security risks. The environmental peacebuilding discourse has been preoccupied by the risks that natural resources play in post-conflict settings by potentially reigniting the conflict. We need to put opportunity and peace back at the centre of environmental peace and conflict research and practice. The presentation also outlined what works for conflict-sensitive NRM - acknowledging complexity; improving assessment capacities; being prepared and think holistically. In fragile states, we need to stress the opportunities and synergies to overcome fragility and improve people's lives.

2. Integrating NRM and peacebuilding to mitigate conflict and strengthen adaptive capacity

Presented by Sarah Gibbons, Chief of Party, PEACE III programme, Pact Kenya

This presentation provides information on the PEACE III programme, a 5-year USAID funded peacebuilding programme that works along the borders of Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. It highlights the work the programme has supported on integrating peacebuilding and climate resilience; providing examples of where cross-border resource sharing agreements, and intergovernmental resolutions have provided the frameworks for communities to find peaceful, and mutually beneficial solutions to the challenges of climate change. It identifies the importance of raising awareness on the links between peace and resilience to border communities and governments to create incentives that will sustain peace and cooperation, and the value of cross border initiatives that adopt broad systems approaches when supporting peace or resilience in large, transboundary dryland landscapes.

3. Linking community-based animal health services with natural resource conflict mitigation in Abyei

Julius Jackson, Technical Officer (Protracted Crises), FAO

This presentation showcases FAO's work on natural resource access and use between *Misseriya* and *Dinka Ngok* communities through a multi-sector livelihood project in the contested AAA between Sudan and South Sudan. In July 2015, FAO started implementing a 2 year project entitled "Improving Livelihoods, Social Peace and Stability". The project aimed to reduce the risk of natural resource-based conflicts and enhance community resilience. The experience and outcomes are a compelling case study on how supporting livelihoods can be an entry point for community-led dialogue, conflict mitigation and resolution. The presentation identifies how FAO played a role in facilitating a process focused on dialogue and building social cohesion at grassroots level, contributing to wider sustaining peace initiatives. It shows how FAO identified a technical window of opportunity through the delivery of community-based animal health veterinary services (embedded in an agricultural livelihood support strategy), which helped improve inter-community relations. Lessons learned from, and the impact of, this intervention are discussed.

Questions and answers

1. Can you give examples of NRM and peacebuilding processes which are working?

On a community level the study in the [AAA](#) gives a nice example of how NRM can facilitate trust-building between different groups. Another good example that shows the positive effects of building social cohesion is [work conducted in Nepal](#). On the national level this is however much more complicated and there are currently no clear cut examples.

2. Can you provide some examples of conflict prevention mechanisms you are working with? Can you share materials, if any?

They are currently in an early stage and relate to established theories in peace and conflict research. Since the work is currently under review I cannot share these at this stage.

3. Could you describe the methodological approach to the identification, analysis and monitoring of conflicts or sources of insecurity that the PEACE III project has attempted to address?

All our work under the programme is underpinned by conflict analyses and baseline assessments conducted at the onset of the programme, and periodically throughout. These provide information on conflict drivers, dynamics and actors. Throughout the programme we continue to analyse conflict trends, to better understand new threats and interest groups, or opportunities for peace and engagement. We collect conflict incident data through the programme using mobile technology and cooperate with the [Inter-governmental authority on development Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism \(IGAD-CEWARN mechanism\)](#) that provides Early Warning Early Response (EWER) information, to ensure we both understand emerging dynamics and shape our programme towards them.

4. Can you tell us if PEACE III uses participatory approaches and which ones involve communities?

PEACE III works through local community-based organizations with close links into the border communities in which we work. These organizations develop programmes of activities with local community groups, and often in response to direct requests for assistance from both communities and government. The programme also adopts formal methodologies such as “Participatory Learning and Action,” “Appreciate Inquiry to inform the programme,” and most recently is incorporating “Most Significant Change” methods to provide space for programme stakeholders to analyse programme impact and inform future action.

5. How does PACT III raise awareness on the conflict-climate change links: Is it easier to approach communities or governments? Are some actors more collaborative than others?

Both communities and government understand the links between conflict and climate change, but perhaps from a different perspective. Communities see climates changing, seasons becoming more erratic and unpredictable. They understand that climate change is affecting resource access, increasing competition and stressing their relations with others. In dryland areas, where resources are communally owned, social capital is an important aspect of NRM and of risk management, so they understand the importance of maintaining ties where possible. Governments are more often siloed, but those working on peacebuilding more often than not understand the complex drivers of conflict, and can relate these to climate change. The audience more in need of awareness are those who traditionally work on NRM or climate change and infrequently consider the roles of conflict in supporting or inhibiting coping or adaptation strategies, or the impact of their work on relationships.

6. Can you give some example of how the PEACE III project reduces levels of violence and raiding between communities?

PEACE III has seen decreases in conflict incidences among areas in which resource sharing agreements have been made. In order for this to be sustained, communities need to be able to recognise that maintaining this continues to support their collective resilience, so that disincentives to conflict are established.

7. How does PACT III deal with the local authorities with different administrations and rules in cross-border areas? Do you work with regional organizations?

PEACE III has a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the IGAD-CEWARN mechanism, which provides the programme with its regional/cross border mandate. The different administrations, legal frameworks and political interests of border governments are some of the most challenging aspects of cross border programming. The programme has had great success in working with border administrations to build trust and relationships around common challenges and opportunities. The programme has also supported the development of formal inter-governmental resolutions that are signed by border administrations and witnessed by national governments. These provide useful frameworks to guide cooperation around issues of migration, trade, border security, resource access etc.

8. Did PACT III receive any funding from local governments or communities? What plans has it got for transferring ownership of some of these initiatives to the communities themselves?

Increasingly the programme is working with governments in co-financing partnerships, where the programme provides support to certain aspects of a process and the government another. Similarly, often the programme will support the development actions plans, in which communities will identify areas they can take forward themselves, those which they can seek government support for, and those they require external assistance.

9. How were the FAO AAA project outcomes evaluated, and by whom?

FAO project and programme outcomes and impact are evaluated through internal monitoring and evaluation against a results framework; FAO's independent Office for Evaluation also undertakes thematic as well as country specific evaluations which assess FAO's response to particular crises, looking at relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

10. For what concerns the FAO AAA project, are the agreements leading to a restoration or rehabilitation of the environments in which they are implemented?

The local peace agreements signed between *Dinka Ngok* and *Misseriya* communities do not specifically cover environmental restoration or rehabilitation. However, both communities recognise their mutual needs for pasture, water and trade that derive from this shared resource, and hold pre- and post-migration conferences to regularise migration in liner with prevailing climatic conditions, thus helping to ensure better grazing management. Burning of grass and bushes is prohibited under recent agreements.

11. Were there any efforts to increase the forage quality and carry capacity of the AAA?

No, this wasn't part of the FAO project in Abyei discussed during the webinar, which focused on animal health interventions. However, understanding carrying capacity, forage quality and stocking rates in grazing systems are critical in rangeland management, and are supported by FAO in diverse contexts.

12. Can you comment on the gender dynamics in the FAO AAA vaccination programme?

Engagement under the vaccination programme was predominantly through men, reflecting extant cultural attitudes and norms, and recognising their role concerning cattle. Women were well represented as trainees in the peacebuilding, gardening and fisheries training sessions of the project, and the agricultural livelihoods programme supported a *Dinka Ngok* women's group engaged in vegetable production. Out of 835 trainees in the period 2016-2017 on agricultural production, 418 were women. Although some peace dialogue workshops were organized to target youth and women, the evaluation of the FAO Project noted that it did not establish a systematic strategy to

involve youth and women in the peace process. Since the project, follow-up conferences between the two communities have encouraged further participation of women from both sides in the meetings.

13. I am interested in the reasons why external support was required to set up negotiating spaces for communities that, historically, must have had something similar in place to manage these. Could you elaborate on that in the AAA context?

Indeed, historically customary laws within the traditional tribal system helped to maintain relations between the two communities and to manage grazing and other natural resources. However, over the past few decades political power struggles at the national level divided interactions along ethnic lines and created an atmosphere of mistrust between the communities. The FAO project helped create an enabling environment for a local level peace agreement to be agreed and implemented; the rapprochement between community leaders was already underway, and there was an ongoing peacebuilding process led by traditional leaders. Given this context, FAO identified a window of opportunity by offering vaccination and treatment of livestock within the AAA as a tool to strengthen the ongoing peacebuilding process.

14. Do you know if the UN peacebuilding overall mandate has any specific goals related to natural resources?

While the links between natural resources, conflict and peace are well understood within the academic community, the UN system has been slow to respond to the risks and opportunities in a comprehensive way. However, with the new Secretary General and his emphasis on conflict prevention, the UN is changing its perspectives on the environment, conflict and peacebuilding, and it is embodied in the sustaining peace concept. Much of this work is led by UNEP's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch. See:

<https://environmentalpeacebuilding.org/>

For more information

- [Webinar series on Sustaining Peace](#)
- [Environmental Peacebuilding](#)
- [CFS Framework For Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises \(CFS-FFA\)](#)
- [Empowering peace: service provision and state legitimacy in Nepal's peace-building process](#)
- [Linking community-based animal health services with natural resource conflict mitigation in the Abyei Administrative Area \(good practice\)](#)
- [Peace and food security: investing in resilience to sustain rural livelihoods amid conflict](#)
- [Natural resource sharing agreements in Uganda \(Mercy Corps / Pact Inc.\)](#)
- [South Sudan's Renewable Energy Potential: A Building Block for Peace \(USIP\)](#)
- [Dimitra Clubs - Enhancing the resilience of rural men and women through community mobilization \(webinar\)](#)



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