



# FRAMING AND RESPONDING TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS IN SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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## I. Introduction

Climate change is being increasingly acknowledged as a risk to human security, the function of societies and international peace. Although there is ongoing debate about the causal mechanisms linking climate change to violent conflict, researchers and policymakers widely agree that climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities that undermine human security and societies' well-being.<sup>1</sup> Resource scarcity and natural disasters can lead to increased cooperation, but the double burden of climate change and political fragility constitutes a serious challenge. These risks are most severe for societies in the Global South.<sup>2</sup> The combined effects imply that societies plagued by conflicts have lower capacity to withstand the negative impacts of climate change and are least able to adapt. It is predominately in fragile societies with weak institutions that climate change increases the risks of violence and violent conflicts.

Against this backdrop, global, regional and bilateral aid actors are increasingly discussing and acting on issues related to security risks posed by climate change. However, a recent review shows that relatively little is known about how, when and why climate-related security risks are being addressed, or with what effects.<sup>3</sup> Given the importance of prevention, multilateral organizations (e.g. the United Nations) and bilateral development

<sup>1</sup> van Baalen, S. and Mobjörk, M., 'Climate change and violent conflict in East Africa: Integrating qualitative and quantitative research to probe the mechanisms', *International Studies Review*, vol. 20, no. 4 (2018), pp. 547–75; Ide, T., 'Research methods for exploring the links between climate change and conflict', *WIREs Climate Change*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2017); and Buhaug, H. and Seter, H., 'Environmental change and armed conflict', eds Newman, E. and DeRouen, K., *Routledge Handbook of Civil Wars* (Routledge: New York, 2014), pp. 197–210.

<sup>2</sup> Mobjörk, M. et al., *Climate-related security risks: Towards an integrated approach*, (SIPRI and Stockholm University: Oct. 2016); and Moran, A. et al., *The Intersection of Global Fragility and Climate Risks* (United States Agency for International Development/Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance: Sep. 2018).

<sup>3</sup> Dellmuth, L. et al., 'Intergovernmental organizations and climate security: Advancing the research agenda', *WIREs Climate Change*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2018).

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## SUMMARY

● Societies worldwide are increasingly facing security challenges posed by climate change. The impacts of climate change exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and undermine human security, and the most detrimental effects are seen in already fragile contexts. Development organizations are key in addressing and mitigating climate-related security risks due to the importance of preventive measures. Such organizations are conceptualizing and integrating security risks posed by climate change, but the work is often done in silos.

This paper contributes to the burgeoning research on the integration of climate-related security risks by organizations, with a case study on how the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is framing and developing its responses.

The study shows that although Sida prioritizes the integration of environment and climate with conflict on a general policy level, there are some challenges when translating the policy into practice. The analysis identifies ambiguities with regard to concepts used and tensions between expert and general knowledge. There are several initiatives at Sida on different levels with the aim to integrate climate and conflict. However, there seems to be room for increased collaboration on operationalization, which could enable even deeper levels of integrated work.



organizations (e.g. the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida) are crucial actors in the mitigation of climate-related security risks.<sup>4</sup> Previous studies suggest that integrated approaches are needed to adequately respond to complex issues that challenge development such as gender equality, peace and conflict, and environment and climate change.<sup>5</sup> However, working in silos tends to dominate; and while this is necessary in the sense that it enables specialized knowledge for well-informed interventions, there is also a need to bridge those silos to address horizontal issues. Strengthening organizations' ability to work on horizontal issues may also be vital for shaping work on the 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' and the 17 global goals for sustainable development.<sup>6</sup>

Sida disburses around \$2.6 billion annually, and is responsible for management of bilateral, regional and humanitarian development cooperation. It also administers the support to global organizations, decided upon by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA).<sup>7</sup> In 2018

approximately \$1 billion was disbursed in the policy area of environment and climate, and \$104 million for conflict resolution, peace and security. The Swedish Government's updated directive to Sida in 2015 implied increased ambitions for integrating the thematic issue areas of environment and climate, conflict and gender. Although these were also included as thematic perspectives in the previous version of the directive from 2010, the primary perspectives were the rights-based perspective and the perspective of the poor.

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Sida now has to consider all four perspectives listed in the directive below, in strategies and policies, as well as in monitoring and evaluation of practical implementation and results (this also includes raising these perspectives in dialogues with actors and countries that Sida collaborates with):

The agency's operations shall be informed by and use as point of departure 1) a rights based perspective and poor people's perspectives on development, 2) an integrated environment- and climate perspective, 3) an integrated gender equality perspective which includes an analysis of women and girls as well as boys situations and 4) an integrated conflict perspective in development cooperation.<sup>8</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to analyse how Sida has framed and responded to climate-related security risks since 2015. By focusing on the time period

<sup>4</sup> Gulrajani, N. and Calleja, R., 'Understanding donor motivations: Developing the Principled Aid Index', Overseas Development Institute working paper 548, 2019; and Smith, D. et al., *Climate Security: Making it #Doable* (Clingendael and SIPRI: Feb. 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Ugglå, F., 'Mainstreaming at Sida: A synthesis report', Sida Studies in Evaluation 2007:05 (Sida: 2006); Mobjörk et al. (note 2); Rüttinger et al., *A New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and Fragility Risks* (adelphi, International Alert, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, European Union Institute for Security Studies: 2015); Krampe, F. and Mobjörk, M., 'Responding to climate-related security risks: Reviewing regional organizations in Asia and Africa', *Current Climate Change Reports*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2018), pp. 330–37; and Gustafsson, M. T., *How do Development Organisations Integrate Climate and Conflict Risks? Experiences and Lessons Learnt from the UK, Germany and the Netherlands* (Stockholm University: Stockholm, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> UN, Sustainable Development Goals, <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>>.

<sup>7</sup> Sida, 'Sida's development cooperation 2018', 12 July 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, *Directive (2010:1080) with Instructions for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Addition Concerning Perspectives SFS 2015:378* (Government Offices of Sweden: 2010), p. 1.



after 2015, specific interest is placed on how Sida has developed its work in the light of the new directive. Special attention is paid to the integration of the environment and climate perspective and the conflict perspective, with a special focus on their overlap. The two perspectives are referred to as ‘environment and climate’ and ‘conflict’ in the instruction and high-level policies, but the conflict-related policy area at Sida is called ‘peace, conflict and security’. This means that both forms will be used in this paper, depending on what is being referred to. This paper analyses how the connections between climate and security are framed in central policies, in strategies and by Sida staff. It also asks how Sida’s organization and procedures support the integration of the two perspectives ‘environment and climate’ and ‘conflict’ and highlights examples of challenges and opportunities that arise when translating policy and strategy into practice.

This study covers policy documents and staff experiences that encompass all geographical areas where Sida works. In addition, the study also focuses on Sida’s work in Eastern Africa (specifically Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan) given that more than half of the countries highly exposed to climate change and political fragility are located in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>9</sup> Sida has a long history of development cooperation in this region and is also an aid actor, working in many fragile contexts. The experience of Sida is an illustrative example of an emerging challenge for many development cooperation actors. The lessons learned by Sida on how to address and integrate climate-related security risks in development cooperation could therefore be expected to be valuable for a broad set of actors.

## II. Previous research and analytical points of departure

Development organizations are key in addressing and mitigating climate-related security risks due to the importance of preventive measures. However, although they are conceptualizing and integrating security risks posed by climate change, the work is often done in silos. Furthermore, while the funding for climate-related aid and peacebuilding internationally has increased over the past two decades, the figures do not say anything about the overlap between the two areas. Actions undertaken with the aim to manage the combined challenges occur in different areas such as: environment and climate change; adaptation and mitigation; natural resource management; peace, security and conflict; and disaster risk reduction.<sup>10</sup> Management and action are also spread across different units in organizations because climate change poses different types of risks and opportunities in different policy areas and geographical contexts. While not all development actors are tasked to work explicitly with climate-related security risks, the fact that relevant work is typically spread across an organization nonetheless reflects the multiple and overlapping factors involved in addressing these risks.

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<sup>9</sup> Moran et al. (note 2).

<sup>10</sup> Harjanne, A. et al., ‘Risk management perspective for climate service development: Results from a study on Finnish organizations’, *Advances in Science and Research*, vol. 14 (2017), pp. 293–304; and Mercer, J. et al., ‘Nation building policies in Timor Leste: Disaster risk reduction, including climate change adaptation’, *Disasters*, vol. 38, no. 4 (2014), pp. 690–718.



A study focused on aid agencies in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom concludes that while high-level policies might underline the importance of integration of environment and climate with peace and security, the translation of policy into practice on the ground can vary considerably.<sup>11</sup> The lack of integration between these areas can be problematic. Climate change adaptation and mitigation interventions that do not have a conflict perspective can inadvertently contribute to conflict. Actions aimed at peace and conflict resolution might be hampered, fail or even worsen conflicts if they do not take the effects of environmental degradation and climate change into account.<sup>12</sup>

It is a matter of debate whether current forms of organizing aid are adequate for horizontal issues and objectives. Some researchers argue that bold reforms of the international institutional aid architecture and political action is required, especially considering the challenges faced in increasingly fragile contexts.<sup>13</sup> International organizations and bilateral aid actors might also have different priorities and ways of working compared with governments in partner countries as well as with one another, leading to a lack of synergies on several levels.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, efforts undertaken in different areas can counteract one another and produce maladaptation.<sup>15</sup>

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The framing of climate change as a security risk has been challenged. These challenges question whether securitization encourages ‘apocalyptic imaginaries’ and contributes to moving the focus from collaboration to military and border concerns.<sup>16</sup> Framing climate change in terms of security has been associated with an alarmist, short-term state-centric security discourse. Although these associations still exist, climate change also undermines human security and is increasingly linked to concepts such as complexity, preparedness, decentralization, empowerment, and risk and resilience.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Gustafsson (note 5).

<sup>12</sup> Vivekanda, J. et al., ‘Climate resilience in fragile and conflict-affected societies: Concepts and approaches’, *Development in Practice*, vol. 24, no. 4 (2014), pp. 487–501.

<sup>13</sup> Arndt, C. and Tarp, F., ‘Aid, environment and climate change’, *Review of Development Economics*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2017), pp. 285–303; Vink, M. and Schouten, G., ‘Foreign-funded adaptation to climate change in Africa: Mirroring administrative traditions or traditions of administrative blueprinting?’, *Review of Policy Research*, vol. 35, no. 6 (2018), pp. 792–834; and Janus, H. et al., ‘Beyond aid: A conceptual perspective on the transformation of development cooperation’, *Journal of International Development*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2015), pp. 155–69.

<sup>14</sup> Nawab, B. and Nyborg, I., ‘Climate change and disasters: Institutional complexities and actors’ priorities for mitigation, adaptation and response’, *IDS Bulletin*, vol. 48, no. 4 (2017).

<sup>15</sup> Mirumachi, N. et al., ‘Unveiling the security concerns of low carbon development: Climate security analysis of the undesirable and unintended effects of mitigation and adaptation’, *Climate and Development* (2019); and Magnan, A. K. et al., ‘Addressing the risk of maladaptation to climate change’, *WIREs Climate Change*, vol. 7, no. 5 (2016), pp. 646–65.

<sup>16</sup> Conca, K. et al., ‘Climate change and the UN Security Council: Bully pulpit or bull in a China shop?’, *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2017), pp. 1–20; Warner, J. and Boas, I., ‘Securitization of climate change: How invoking global dangers for instrumental ends can backfire’, *Environmental and Planning C: Politics and Space*, vol. 37, no. 8 (2019); and Mason, M. and Zeitoun, M., ‘Questioning environmental security’, *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 179, no. 4 (2013), pp. 294–97.

<sup>17</sup> Adger, W. N. et al., ‘Human security’, eds Field, C. B. et al., *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 755–91; and Boas, I. and Rothe, D., ‘From



One argument for using the security discourse is that global environmental and climate changes are of a scale that goes beyond the capacity of individual states to act on. Extraordinary transformative change is perceived as being necessary to protect humans and ecosystems. Matthew et al. argue that ‘environmental change reveals the connections—as well as the frictions—between the security of individuals and communities and the security and sustainability of ecosystems and species, including humanity’.<sup>18</sup> The climate security discourse therefore includes conventional and new forms of security understandings. McDonald, for instance, makes a case for an ‘ecological security discourse’, which orients towards ecosystem resilience and the rights of the most vulnerable populations (present and future).<sup>19</sup> Research on climate security has tended to focus on either human or state security and associated policy areas.<sup>20</sup> However, to enable improved governance responses, studies with a broader perspective are also necessary. This was the approach taken by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its review of human security for the Fifth Assessment Report, which included different kinds of security risks as well as compounded risks.<sup>21</sup>

***A comprehensive security approach takes into account that climate change and climate variability simultaneously affect different dimensions of security***

In line with the above, Mobjörk et al. call for a ‘comprehensive’ approach to security, in which human, community, state, international and ecological aspects are considered.<sup>22</sup> A comprehensive security approach takes into account that climate change and climate variability simultaneously affect different dimensions of security (or—using the vocabulary of security studies—different referent objects). Depending on the specific case or context, these different dimensions of security could be interconnected, and responses to security challenges in one dimension might lead to (unintended) consequences in others. As the security framing could differ within and across organizations, analyses of actors’ responses to climate security challenges need to review the framing(s)—or the explicitly expressed commitments—adopted in addition to investigate which actions are undertaken and how they interconnect. In the analysis of Sida, this understanding of climate-related security risks is combined with insights on mainstreaming in official development assistance (ODA) from environmental policy integration literature.<sup>23</sup>

According to Persson and Klein, mainstreaming in ODA can be conceptualized in three dimensions: horizontally, vertically and internationally. In addition, mainstreaming can be analysed at different hierarchical administrative levels and can be classified as macro, meso and

conflict to resilience? Explaining recent changes in climate security discourse and practice’, *Environmental Politics*, vol. 25, no. 4 (2016), pp. 614, 617.

<sup>18</sup> Matthew, R. A. et al., *Global Environmental Change and Human Security* (The MIT Press: 2010), p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> McDonald, M., ‘Climate change and security: Towards ecological security?’, *International Theory*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2018), pp. 153–80.

<sup>20</sup> Dellmuth et al. (note 3).

<sup>21</sup> Adger et al. (note 17).

<sup>22</sup> Mobjörk, M. et al., ‘Governing climate-related security risks: An analytical framework guiding comparative analysis’, Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Toronto, 27–30 March 2019, p. 5; and Mobjörk et al. (note 2).

<sup>23</sup> The literature on mainstreaming in organizations is, to a large degree, focused on gender mainstreaming or environmental policy integration.



**Whether or not mainstreaming is successful—and by extension, whether an integrated approach is enabled—is the subject of debate and is highly context dependent**

micro in character.<sup>24</sup> The macro level refers to mainstreaming of general character (e.g. high-level policy); the meso level entails modifications of country strategies and sector programmes; and the micro level entails project design modifications (and more active seeking of synergies for example) on local levels. The effects of mainstreaming can be investigated and analysed in relation to policy inputs, process, outputs and outcomes.<sup>25</sup> For the policy inputs, the formal framings—or explicitly expressed commitments—are considered, such as high-level policy documents and strategies. To understand the process, it is of interest to study procedural and organizational responses; the policy outputs can be assessed through analysis of the proportion of ODA dedicated to the mainstreaming issue in question. Outcomes refer to the ultimate impact on the ground. This study focuses on the policy inputs and the process as expressed in policy documents and interviews. Policy outputs are addressed as background contextualization, and the outcomes are discussed indirectly in relation to the challenges related to translating policy into practice. The concept of mainstreaming is sometimes used synonymously with integrated approaches, but in this context, integrated approaches are understood as consisting of the deeper levels of mainstreaming, encompassing the meso and micro levels discussed above.<sup>26</sup>

Whether or not mainstreaming is successful—and by extension, whether an integrated approach is enabled—is the subject of debate and is highly context dependent. Previous studies indicate that this process is contingent on the amount of resources available for core issues versus the cross-cutting theme in question. There can also be goal conflicts and trade-offs among policy areas, as well as difficulties with matching donor and recipient or partner country priorities. It also matters how mainstreaming is financed and organized—who decides what is mainstreamed, where and how, for instance.<sup>27</sup>

The entry points discussed above emphasize the importance of carefully investigating how climate security is framed in organizations, in addition to exploring how the goal of integration is translated into practice. Against this backdrop, this paper contributes with a case study on Sida.

<sup>24</sup> Persson, Å., 'Mainstreaming climate change adaptation into official development assistance: A case of international policy integration', *Environmental Policy Integration and Multi-level Governance Papers No. 36* (Ecologic: Institute for International and European Environmental Policy: Berlin, Oct. 2008); and Persson, Å. and Klein R. T., 'Mainstreaming adaptation to climate change into official development assistance: Integration of long-term climate concerns and short-term development needs', *Political Science* (2008).

<sup>25</sup> Persson, Å., 'Environmental policy integration and bilateral development assistance: Challenges and opportunities with an evolving governance framework', *International Environmental Agreements*, vol. 9 (2009), pp. 409–29.

<sup>26</sup> Mobjörk et al. (note 2); Rüttinger et al. (note 5); Krampe and Mobjörk (note 5); and Gustafsson (note 5).

<sup>27</sup> Klein, R. J. T., 'Mainstreaming climate adaptation into development: A policy dilemma', eds Ansohn, A. and Pleskovic, B., *Climate Governance and Development: Berlin Workshop Series 2010* (World Bank: 2010), pp. 35–52; Persson (note 24); Persson (note 25); and Persson, Å. and Klein, R. J. T., 'Mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in official development assistance: Building on environmental policy integration', ed. Harris, P., *Climate Change and Foreign Policy: Case Studies from East to West* (Routledge: London, 2009).



### III. Materials and methods

The study is based on analysis of documents, interviews and a workshop. The documents included 14 general documents and high-level policies from the Swedish government and Sida, such as letters of appropriation and annual reports for the years 2015–19 as well as current country and regional results strategies. Additional documents were explicitly related to the two policy areas of environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security at Sida. There were 11 documents for the area of peace, conflict and security, including overarching strategies, national plans, thematic overviews and toolbox documents. There were 27 documents for the area of environment and climate, including overarching strategies, thematic overviews, guides and toolbox documents. The analysis was conducted during late 2018 and early 2019. Documents from other policy areas at Sida would also be of relevance to analyse in relation to Sida's capacity to handle climate-related security risks. However, for this study, the focus was limited to the integration of the two policy areas of environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security.

To broaden the analysis, 15 interviews were conducted (24 people in total) with staff at Sida's headquarters (HQ) in Stockholm and at Swedish embassies in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and regionally, mainly during early 2019. The interviewees were policy specialists, programme officers, heads of department and heads of cooperation in embassies who worked with either environment and climate, or peace, conflict and security (or both), or who had a responsibility for both areas at an embassy or a unit at Sida HQ. The interviews were semi-structured in form, ran for about an hour each and were all built on the same set of questions.<sup>28</sup>

The questions explored the informants' views on: (a) the relationship between environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security; (b) how they worked with integrating each perspective in their area of work; and (c) what organizational structures and support existed to enable integrative work. Interviewees were then asked to provide examples of projects and programmes that they considered integrated both perspectives in interesting ways and why. Due to respondent time restrictions, richer material was obtained for some contexts than for others; however, several of the people interviewed at Sida HQ also had experience from work and management in Eastern Africa. Their experience provided a relevant picture in relation to the purpose and research questions. The interviews have been coded, but references show whether the person was working at Sida HQ or at an embassy.

A workshop with Sida staff was also organized in October 2019 (seven people attended, including two lead policy specialists). The aim was to present and discuss the preliminary results of the study, enabling feedback and deepening of the study's core findings.

This paper now continues with an empirical part, which is organized thematically and reflects the research questions, focusing on framings,

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<sup>28</sup> Kvale, S. and S. Brinkmann, *The Qualitative Research Interview* [Den Kvalitative Forskningsintervju] (Studentlitteratur: 2009).



organization and responses to climate-related security risks within Sida. The study's findings are described, previous research related to, and the challenges and opportunities of an integrated approach identified.

#### IV. Multiple framings and a diversity of concepts

A diversity of concepts of relevance to climate-related security risks are in use at Sida, including: peace, conflict, security, human security, environment, climate, resilience, risk and a 'triple nexus'. Which concepts are used and how depends on what strategy and policy area are in focus, the organizational unit and the staff area of expertise. The different uses and interpretations of these concepts are underpinned by how high-level documents are formulated, and they address integration of all four perspectives in a general and macro-level manner. There has been an increase in references to integration of perspectives from 2015 and onwards in government directives to Sida. However, discussions about combined climate and conflict risks or guidelines relating to the implementation of integration are generally absent.

In the documents specifically related to peace, conflict and security, gender is much more explicitly integrated than environment and climate. Equitable distribution of resources is portrayed as one of the eight pillars of peace, and food security is presented as something that can negatively affect conflicts. However, environment and climate is not usually discussed more broadly other than in general reference to the integration policy. Sustainability and resilience are generally portrayed as enabling peace, and peace is seen as key for enabling sustainable development. In the documents specifically related to environment and climate, gender, peace and security aspects tend to be mentioned explicitly, but predominately on a relatively general level. Annual reports review the thematic perspectives, but how much each theme includes references to the other three varies considerably. It is more common for environment and climate as well as peace, conflict and security to refer to gender equality than to one another.

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The diversity of concepts and interpretations presents challenges and opportunities, internally as well as externally in relation to other aid actors and partner organizations. Internally, the diversity reflects historic and current tensions among the different areas of operation, as exemplified by the following quote from an interview:

If conflict is in the meeting title, a certain group of people show up. If there's environment and climate, another group of people come. If both environment and conflict is the title, no humanitarian people show up. If you have resilience and risk, nobody comes, or maybe some humanitarian people. Conflict and climate are still kind of separate. Your background and terminology determine a lot.<sup>29</sup>

Although the statement above was made with humour, it illustrates the existence of silos that several interviewees mentioned. At the same time,

<sup>29</sup> Interview no. 5, Sida HQ.



several staff interviewed maintained that collaboration and integration is increasing.<sup>30</sup>

This multiplicity of concepts is echoed in other studies on climate security.<sup>31</sup> Such diversity per se is not necessarily considered a problem, and can sometimes even be productive. This is particularly the case when Sida collaborates with external partners that also employ a variety of concepts and definitions. Being able to adjust and embrace the complexity can be important for efficiency and ownership.<sup>32</sup> Some interviewees emphasized that priorities need to be made when it comes to concepts used, as diversity can also create problems. Having unclear concepts and overlaps is something that can be traced in the broader aid architecture, some argued, creating unnecessary positioning where there could be extended synergies instead.<sup>33</sup>

A concept often used at Sida of relevance to the handling of climate-related security risks is the triple nexus. This is part of the UN ‘New Way of Working’, and is about increasing the links among humanitarian aid, peace and development, towards shared outcomes, including resilience.<sup>34</sup> Although some interviewees who worked with peace, conflict and security explained that the triple nexus includes a resilience perspective, some of the interviewees who mainly worked with environment and climate did not consider their area as being included.<sup>35</sup> Several different understandings of central concepts coexist together, and ideas about the overlap among policy areas differ.

Several interviewees thought that resilience has the potential to become a unifying concept for Sida’s work on integrating different perspectives and therefore also its work on climate-related security risks.<sup>36</sup> However, some interviewees claimed resilience seems to be mostly associated with environment and climate (and sometimes also with humanitarian aid) and less with peace, conflict and security, even though Sida considers peace, conflict and security to be an important part of resilience work.<sup>37</sup> Resilience is a flexible concept, which means that it can be understood in multiple ways depending on context. The Swedish word used to denote resilience at Sida is ‘motståndskraft’, which in English is translated as ‘resistance’. The Swedish translation evidently causes some confusion, and some consider it as reflective of the early stages of the resilience debate. A 2019 report by the Swedish National Audit Office points out there are different definitions of resilience in different documents.<sup>38</sup> Some interviewees suggested that resilience against crises and catastrophes needs to explicitly encompass all crises and catastrophes, not just those related to environment and climate. In this regard, risk was also considered a productive entry point that could enable a broader interpretation of resilience:<sup>39</sup>

*Several interviewees thought that resilience has the potential to become a unifying concept for Sida’s work on integrating different perspectives*

<sup>36</sup> Interview no. 4, Sida HQ; Interview no. 5, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 10, Sida HQ.

<sup>37</sup> Interview no. 4, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 5, Sida HQ.

<sup>38</sup> Swedish National Audit Office, ‘Sidas humanitära bistånd och långsiktiga utvecklingssamarbete: Förutsättningar för samverkan’ [Sida’s humanitarian aid and long-term development cooperation: Prerequisites for collaboration], (Swedish National Audit Office: Stockholm, 2019), pp. 10, 16.

<sup>39</sup> Interview no. 5, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 8, Sida HQ.



Resilience has to be discussed; today it is mostly associated with environment and climate. Those who work with environment and climate should look more at disaster risk reduction and those who work with conflict should link peacebuilding to resilience.<sup>40</sup>

Sida staff interviewed at Sida HQ and at embassies tended to understand and describe climate change as a multiplier of negative effects related to environmental change and the management of natural resources. The connections between climate change and security challenges were portrayed as being apparent to the staff working with Eastern Africa (some of who also worked with the Sahel region). Water and water resource management was

perceived as one of the biggest challenges at present, and was considered a good example of how climate and conflict can relate to one another. As the interviewed Sida staff saw it, the intensity and unpredictability of, most notably, droughts and floods have changed. This adds to already existing challenges with awareness, adaptive capacities, water management and food security.<sup>41</sup> The interviewed embassy staff tended

to focus more on institutional architecture and practical opportunities and challenges rather than concepts and definitions. They nonetheless mentioned resilience, the New Way of Working and the triple nexus as broad and useful points of departure for working with climate-related security risks and as being important for all the perspectives in conjunction with the increased coordination between humanitarian aid and development cooperation.<sup>42</sup>

In a study focusing on Sida's counterpart in the UK, the Department for International Development, Boas and Rothe conclude that while climate-resilience storylines can be 'diverse and messy', the concept has been productive specifically because of its flexibility, enabling many different actors to relate to it.<sup>43</sup> They maintain that resilience acknowledges complexity and uncertainty and disconnects from alarmist tones, turning the prevention of climate-related conflict into a broader societal endeavour that enables a more bottom-up approach.<sup>44</sup> Old climate conflict storylines have not been replaced, but rather merged with new ones and rearticulated in light of resilience discourse.<sup>45</sup> The situation seems similar at Sida in the sense that old concepts are being rearticulated in light of new ones, but diversity still prevails in terms of what concepts are considered central for understanding the climate–conflict overlap.

***Diversity still prevails in terms of what concepts are considered central for understanding the climate–conflict overlap***

## V. Enabling (dis)integration? Organization and support for working across silos

As the previous chapter discussed, the way concepts are interpreted in an institutional setting is partly dependent on how individuals relate these

<sup>40</sup> Interview no. 5, Sida HQ.

<sup>41</sup> Interview no. 6, Sida HQ; Interview no. 9, Sida HQ; Interview no. 5, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 11, Embassy.

<sup>42</sup> Interview no. 11, Embassy; and Interview no. 14, Embassy.

<sup>43</sup> Boas and Rothe (note 17), pp. 613–32; and Ruszczyk, H. A., 'Ambivalence towards discourse of disaster resilience', *Disasters*, vol. 43, no. 4 (2019), pp. 818–39.

<sup>44</sup> Boas and Rothe (note 17), p. 622.

<sup>45</sup> Boas and Rothe (note 17), pp. 616–17.



concepts to already established routines.<sup>46</sup> To understand how specific concepts are framed in an organization, it is necessary to consider the institutional architecture of relevance to the organization. While the directive update in 2015 is a relatively recent development, an integrated approach, or mainstreaming, is far from a new phenomenon at Sida. Moreover, the agency has worked with peace, conflict and security, as well as environment and climate, for decades, albeit with different central concepts in focus.<sup>47</sup> Environment has been part of the central goals since 1988. Peace, conflict and security has been on the agenda since 1999, but joined as a perspective in 2015 when more central thematic resources were made available to the area.<sup>48</sup> This chapter begins by outlining examples of reports that have targeted the intersection between environment and climate and conflict at Sida, followed by a discussion about organizational preconditions and the role of knowledge.

In the mid-2000s there was a growing debate internationally on whether and how climate change was linked to violent conflict. Sida also showed interest in this, and commissioned a study on the topic.<sup>49</sup> The report emphasizes that vulnerability to climate change is determined by exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity, and that climate change increases the risk of undermining peace and security to a greater extent when there is political instability and poor governance.<sup>50</sup> The report concludes that ‘conflict-sensitive climate change policies can actively promote peacebuilding, and that climate-proof peacebuilding and development policies can be effective climate change adaptation policies’.<sup>51</sup> The report recommends that international frameworks on peacebuilding, development, adaptation and disaster management should be linked so as to improve coordination with regional and subregional groupings. This would help to address climate and environmental changes in conjunction with other development goals and prioritize adaptation over mitigation in fragile states.<sup>52</sup>

Sida emphasized this interconnectedness of climate and environment with other goals in 2010, including potential indicators for different sectors.<sup>53</sup> However, mainstreaming ambitions at Sida has generally been difficult to implement fully and evenly. This is also the case for gender, which has been mainstreamed the longest. Reasons for this include competition among policies and perspectives, lack of adequate management, monitoring and follow-up, lack of—or varying—knowledge and competence about each policy area as well as varying levels of engagement/interest.<sup>54</sup> ‘Mainstreaming fatigue’ can also occur when there are too many per-

*Mainstreaming ambitions at Sida has generally been difficult to implement fully and evenly*

<sup>46</sup> Boas and Rothe (note 17), pp. 613–32.

<sup>47</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Sweden 2019* (OECD Publishing: Paris, 2019).

<sup>48</sup> Bryld, E. et al., ‘Evaluation of Sida’s support to peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict contexts’, Synthesis report, Sida Evaluation 2019:1 (Sida: 2019).

<sup>49</sup> Smith, D. and Vivekananda, J., ‘A climate of conflict’, Sida International Alert (Sida: Feb. 2008).

<sup>50</sup> Smith and Vivekananda (note 49), pp. 7–8, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Smith and Vivekananda (note 49), pp. 22, 51.

<sup>52</sup> Smith and Vivekananda (note 49), pp. 9–10.

<sup>53</sup> Sida, ‘Environmental and climate change indicators: Guidance at country and sector level’, (Department for Policy Support, Sida: Oct. 2010).

<sup>54</sup> Uggla (note 5); Bjarnegård, E. and Uggla, F., ‘Putting priority into practice: Sida’s implementation of its plan for gender integration’, EBA report 2018:07 (Expert Group for Aid Studies: 2018); and



spectives or issues to integrate. This was also raised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation of Sida in 2019, recognizing the many strategies:

While strategies individually are aligned to the policy framework, there are not clear connections among them and this can result in duplication of funding to partners and lost opportunities to create synergies.<sup>55</sup>

Sida commissioned a report on the relationship between climate change and violent conflict in 2017. That report reviews knowledge on the links between climate change and conflict, and discusses experiences from Sida and the Swedish MFA.<sup>56</sup> It concludes that the effects of climate change will grow in magnitude, but that consequences in space and time are difficult to predict. Furthermore, the report finds that while the two policy areas had not yet been systematically integrated, several interventions of relevance were already being undertaken on a country level and in regions. Sida was recommended to ensure that policies and strategies include good governance, and interaction among sectors and policy areas, while also addressing risks of maladaptation.

### **Organizational preconditions: Pockets of integration**

While Sida has engaged in the overlap between the two policy areas, as discussed above, it does not have a unit or other institutional configuration aimed specifically at addressing combined climate and conflict challenges. Sida's approach has been that all policy areas and corresponding units have to integrate the four perspectives into all its operations. Each perspective has a lead policy specialist centrally at Sida; there are also expert advisors

on each perspective employed at the different departments and units of Sida as well as at Swedish embassies. The expert advisors collaborate with the lead policy specialists within each perspective and with each other to various degrees.<sup>57</sup>

Some staff have an explicit task to work with integration of more than one perspective, and Sida has recently recruited staff to work at the embassies with an explicit task to bridge humanitarian aid and development cooperation within the resilience programmes in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. There are programme officers who focus broadly on resilience as part of their tasks, but the departments at Sida have slightly different ways of working.<sup>58</sup>

The position of lead policy specialist for peace and security has existed since shortly after the 2015 decision to integrate both (and other) perspectives into all operations, while the lead policy specialist for environment and climate has existed for longer.<sup>59</sup> Tasks of the lead policy specialists include

***'Mainstreaming fatigue' can also occur when there are too many perspectives or issues to integrate***

Persson, Å. and Klein, R. T. (2009), 'Environment and climate change integration in Sida's development cooperation: An overview', Sida Studies in Evaluation 2019:2 (Sida: 2019).

<sup>55</sup> OECD (note 47).

<sup>56</sup> Schaar, J., 'The relationship between climate change and violent conflict', Green tool box/peace and security tool box: Working paper (Sida: 2017).

<sup>57</sup> Interview no. 7, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 12, Embassy.

<sup>58</sup> Interview no. 5, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 6, Sida HQ. See also Sida, 'Evaluation at Sida: Annual report 2018', Sida 2019:1 (Sida: 2019), p. 7.

<sup>59</sup> Persson and Klein (note 54), p. 7.



to: support Sida's internal work through networks and development of support materials (e.g. toolbox documents); prepare materials for the General Director, the Swedish MFA and the Swedish Government; represent the agency externally; and create good preconditions for integration of their perspectives. One key challenge is therefore to determine which work should be done on what level to achieve sufficient breadth and specialization. Some aspects of the integration of perspectives are reasonable to discuss on a portfolio level while preparing for new country strategies for example; others are aspects best discussed when preparing concrete initiatives.<sup>60</sup> Previous studies have analysed how 'portfolio screening' has been used as a way to analyse the extent to which development activities address cross-cutting issue areas and also to identify opportunities for future projects or programmes.<sup>61</sup>

The lead policy specialists have found that the 2015 decision improved the preconditions for integrated work and collaboration between environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security. At the same time, the resources allocated to their type of work has been reduced, and they considered it difficult to achieve breadth and depth consistently. Usually, efforts have to be made in shorter intense working periods, such as when collaboration is required through, for example, thematic reports to the Swedish MFA. Other interviewed staff reflected along a similar logic: time for systematic and long-term integration work is lacking, and several interviewees were of the opinion that the administrative allocation is too small in relation to the large volume of money and activity being managed.<sup>62</sup> A similar conclusion was drawn in the 2019 OECD DAC evaluation of Swedish development cooperation, which states that Sida is understaffed in relation to its growing ODA budget, not least in relation to the area of environment and climate change.<sup>63</sup> It is relevant to mention here that Sida's administrative allocation has been increased significantly for 2020.

Resistance against integration of perspectives may be encountered when there is a lack of resources and expertise, or when the most important issue to focus on in the strategies (e.g. strategy goals or horizontal perspectives) is unclear.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, Sida's decentralized model of development cooperation entails that embassies are relatively autonomous; for example, they demand different kinds of support from Sida HQ depending on the management, strategies and staff profiles. There tends to be more exchange and dialogue in the work with preparing strategies for example, but less so in the operationalization.<sup>65</sup> This also means that Sida HQ has different and

***One key challenge is to determine which work should be done on what level to achieve sufficient breadth and specialization***

<sup>60</sup> This was also raised in Interview no. 4, Sida HQ.

<sup>61</sup> For example, Klein, R. J. T. et al., 'Portfolio screening to support the mainstreaming of adaptation to climate change into development assistance', *Climatic Change*, vol. 84, no. 1 (2007), pp. 23–44.

<sup>62</sup> Interview no. 1, Sida HQ; Interview no. 6, Sida HQ; Interview no. 2, Sida HQ; Interview no. 3, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 9, Sida HQ.

<sup>63</sup> OECD (note 47).

<sup>64</sup> Interview no. 1, Sida HQ.

<sup>65</sup> One way for Sida HQ to complement and support the operationalization is to 'boost' embassies with a temporary competence team on a certain theme; this is something that has been tested only recently.



sometimes limited ability to steer and support the integration of perspectives on a country level.<sup>66</sup>

As in the case with Sida, other development organizations also face challenges concerning organizational preconditions. A study of development organizations in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK shows that shared challenges in achieving effective integration of climate and conflict included, for example, lack of coordination among different policy areas and lack of sufficient expertise.<sup>67</sup>

### **Capacities for climate and conflict integration: generalist knowledge versus expertise**

In addition to lack of sufficient resources and adequate organizational structures and routines, lack of knowledge is considered one of the obstacles for integrative work.<sup>68</sup> Some interviewees expressed that there is a deep-seated tradition of expertise at Sida which values in-depth knowledge coupled with specific perspectives or associated subareas. This is something that

can hamper the ability to bridge different areas of expertise, enabling integration among the four perspectives.<sup>69</sup> The interviewees generally maintained that in addition to in-depth expertise, it is important to have sufficient knowledge about all four perspectives and both policy areas (environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security)

in focus to be able to see the connections among them. Working in teams is something that helps develop relevant knowledge, but the demands on knowledge are perceived to have increased.<sup>70</sup> Although there seems to be considerable interest in learning more about the perspectives that are not people's original area of expertise, the experience of interviewed staff was that there is too little time for integrative work.

Sida has one external help desk for environment and climate, and one for peace, conflict and security. Not all interviewees have used the help desks, but those that have considered them useful, especially given the constraints on expertise and time discussed above. However, some interviewees would like the staff of the two help desks to interact more with one another to increase integration. The knowledge that the help desks assist with does not generally include integration with the other perspectives; instead, contextualization and practical application is up to Sida.<sup>71</sup> There is a tension regarding in-house knowledge versus external expertise in this sense. On the one hand, help desks are considered a necessary complement as Sida cannot have all expertise in-house all the time. On the other hand, the contextualization can suffer when the knowledge is not from within Sida. Some interviewees claimed that help desks cannot and should not replace internal knowledge.<sup>72</sup> This implies that Sida ought to strengthen its in-house

*There is a tension regarding in-house knowledge versus external expertise in this sense*

<sup>66</sup> Workshop, SIPRI, 21 Oct. 2019.

<sup>67</sup> Gustafsson (note 5), p. 59.

<sup>68</sup> Gustafsson (note 5), pp. 58–59.

<sup>69</sup> Interview no. 3, Sida HQ; Interview no. 9, Sida HQ; and Workshop, SIPRI, 21 Oct. 2019.

<sup>70</sup> Interview no. 9, Sida HQ.

<sup>71</sup> Interview no. 10, Sida HQ.

<sup>72</sup> Interview no. 4, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 7, Sida HQ.



knowledge. This was also raised in the 2019 evaluation by the OECD DAC, which concludes that Sida is, in part, too dependent on external help desks and should work to ensure internal capacity development, not least within environment and climate change.<sup>73</sup>

## VI. Translating policy into practice

High-level policies in development organizations sometimes include phrases underlining the importance of integration of environment and climate with peace, conflict and security. However, the translation of policy into practice on the ground varies considerably, and the quest for coordination and synergies is difficult.<sup>74</sup> A key challenge for aid organizations is to bring together the management of issue areas that tend to remain divided. The focus in this chapter is on the challenges and opportunities that arise when translating Sida's policy and strategy into practice in Eastern Africa. It looks at how issues related to environment and climate are considered in the operations concerning conflict, peace and security, and vice versa.

### **Country results strategies and their follow-up as preconditions for integrative work**

The country-specific results strategies from the Swedish MFA prescribe development cooperation efforts alongside global and regional strategies. The country strategies comprise the most concrete of the policy levels in terms of taking the next step with discussing how the perspectives overlap and interact. The results strategies for Ethiopia and Kenya run for the period 2016–20, whereas the strategies for Somalia and Sudan are newer and cover 2018–22. The regional strategy for sub-Saharan Africa runs from 2016 to 2021.

The strategies for Ethiopia and Kenya have environment and climate among their main goals; human rights and gender are also mentioned, but not conflict.<sup>75</sup> Conflict is mentioned later in the strategies, in relation to natural resources, natural disasters and famine.<sup>76</sup> The strategies for Somalia and Sudan refer to 'peaceful and inclusive societies' and 'resilience, environment, climate change and energy' as main goals, and also discuss these issues together.<sup>77</sup> Similar to the strategy for Somalia, the strategy for Sudan has goals that relate to peace and security (sustainable peace) and environment

<sup>73</sup> OECD (note 47), p. 68.

<sup>74</sup> Gustafsson (note 5).

<sup>75</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, 'Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Ethiopia 2016–2020' (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: 2016), p. 2; and Government Offices of Sweden, 'Results strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Kenya 2016–2020' (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: 2016), p. 3.

<sup>76</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, 'Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Ethiopia 2016–2020' (note 75), p. 5; and Government Offices of Sweden, 'Results strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Kenya 2016–2020' (note 75), p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, 'Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Somalia 2018–2022' (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: 2018). Government Offices of Sweden, 'Results strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Sudan 2018–2022' (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: 2018).

and climate change (environment, climate, agriculture and energy).<sup>78</sup> In the strategy for Sudan, issues related to environment and climate change are explicitly identified as underlying causes of conflict.<sup>79</sup> The regional strategy for sub-Saharan Africa relates to all the perspectives in its goals, including ‘better environment, sustainable use of natural resources, reduced climate impact and strengthened resilience to environmental impact, climate change and natural disasters’ and ‘human security and freedom from violence’.<sup>80</sup> The strategy also discusses these issues in integrated ways: ‘Depleted natural resources and climate change, environmentally hazardous emissions and exposure to chemicals and waste puts a strain on ecosystems, on land and oceans, exacerbates livelihood opportunities and resilience, and risks creating tensions and conflicts.’<sup>81</sup>

In general, interviewed Sida staff working on Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan (those based at Sida HQ and at embassies) considered the results strategies to be good points of departure and guidance for their work, although there can sometimes be ambiguities about what weighs heaviest in the strategies, for example: goals or perspectives. At the same time flexibility was considered important and necessary, not least to operate in

contexts with conflict and recurring humanitarian crises.<sup>82</sup>

Alignment and clarity about concepts, goals and perspectives in the instructions and strategies strengthen preconditions for integration.<sup>83</sup> If not all perspectives are mentioned in the strategies, opportunities for alignment and integration are missed and recruitment may not cover all competences required for integrated work.<sup>84</sup> Staff interviewed at Sida HQ

agreed that these strategies are clear, but some maintained that an increase in their level of context specificity might facilitate perspective integration.<sup>85</sup> Several interviewees emphasized the importance of high-quality context-specific analyses, in relation to the strategy processes and for practical work in the country context.<sup>86</sup> Local, national and regional analyses are needed that also include short- and long-term challenges. This will enable making the right priorities and tailoring efficient responses.

Monitoring, follow-up and reporting procedures also affect how policy is translated into practice. The reports that are produced to follow up the results strategies enable qualitative analysis and address the perspectives, but not necessarily their overlap. Several interviewees argued that the use

**Alignment and clarity about concepts, goals and perspectives in the instructions and strategies strengthen preconditions for integration**

<sup>78</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, ‘Results strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation with Sudan 2018–2022’ (note 77), p. 3.

<sup>79</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, ‘Results strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation with Sudan 2018–2022’ (note 77), pp. 4–5.

<sup>80</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, ‘Strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa 2016–2021’ (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: 2016), pp. 3–4.

<sup>81</sup> Government Offices of Sweden, ‘Strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa 2016–2021’ (note 80), pp. 6, 11.

<sup>82</sup> Interview no. 8, Sida HQ. This is also something the *OECD Development Cooperation Peer Review: Sweden 2019* concluded as well as Guljarani, N. and Mills, L., ‘Fit for fragility? An exploration of risk stakeholders and systems inside Sida’, EBA report 2019:02 (Expert Group for Aid Studies: 2019).

<sup>83</sup> Interview no. 3, Sida HQ; Interview no. 7, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 8, Sida HQ.

<sup>84</sup> Interview no. 7, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 9, Sida HQ.

<sup>85</sup> Workshop, SIPRI, 21 Oct. 2019.

<sup>86</sup> Interview no. 2, Sida HQ; Interview no. 4, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 8, Sida HQ.



of the OECD Rio Markers for environment and climate, for example, can sometimes give a misleading picture of what is done, and more serves the purpose of tracking financial flows.<sup>87</sup>

Previous studies on the application of the Rio Markers show that while ambitions with the system are good, problems include over- and under-reporting as well as interpretation issues.<sup>88</sup> In addition, not all perspectives are tracked by the same systems. Environment and climate and gender equality are tracked by the OECD markers, but not conflict. More qualitative follow-up as a complement would likely benefit integration; new ways of working with indicators and regular improved follow-up dialogues could also be productive depending on the type of strategy in focus.<sup>89</sup>

### **Working in fragile contexts: long-term ambitions versus short-term needs**

The staff interviewed worked in different country contexts: some more stable and some more fragile. The potentially greatest challenge in fragile contexts is that Sida staff are often forced to focus on short-term needs. This reduces the ability to also address the long-term goals that are necessary to handle many climate-related challenges, for example those related to agriculture.<sup>90</sup> Simultaneously working in the short and long terms and bridging across the different time horizons are well-known challenges of working on climate-related security risks.<sup>91</sup>

Another challenge in fragile contexts can be a lack of local partners to work with, which often also creates a lack of continuity. In these situations, collaboration with larger multilateral actors becomes essential because they have presence in the countries and access to various areas and actors.<sup>92</sup> However, this implies that Sida's priorities need to be aligned with those of the collaborating actors. Similarly, when national priorities in the partner country do not align with Sida priorities, it might also be difficult to work with the perspectives.<sup>93</sup> For example, environment and climate may not be high on the political agenda in the partner country. At the same time, some interviewees suggested that environment and climate can be a less politically sensitive entry point to work with than conflict. Environment and climate efforts can contribute indirectly to peacebuilding,

*The potentially biggest challenge in fragile contexts is that Sida staff are often forced to focus on short-term needs*

<sup>87</sup> OECD, *OECD DAC Rio Markers for Climate Handbook* (OECD Publishing: Paris, 2016); Interview no. 3; Sida HQ; Interview no. 4, Sida HQ; Interview no. 8, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 9, Sida HQ.

<sup>88</sup> See for example Fridahl, M. et al., 'Svenskt bilateralt klimatrelaterat bistånd 2010–2016: Policymarkörer i teori och praktik' [Swedish bilateral climate related aid 2010–2016: Policy markers in theory and practice] (Tankesmedjan Fores: Stockholm, 2019); and Weikmans, R. et al., 'Assessing the credibility of how climate adaptation aid projects are categorised', *Development in Practice*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2017), 458–71.

<sup>89</sup> Interview no. 10, Sida HQ.

<sup>90</sup> Interview no. 13, Embassy. This problem is shared by other aid actors, see for example Government Offices of Sweden, 'Results strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Sudan 2018–2022' (note 77), p. 48.

<sup>91</sup> Smith et al. (note 4).

<sup>92</sup> Interview no. 13, Embassy.

<sup>93</sup> Vivekanda et al. (note 12).



conflict prevention and human security through capacity building and strengthening of institutions for example.<sup>94</sup>

The increased focus on coordination between humanitarian aid and development cooperation was perceived by staff as positive in general and of importance for being able to work with the overlap between environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security. Better internal incentives for integration were called for by one interviewee, who claimed that the different policy areas measure success differently and are not necessarily incentivized to work towards the same goal.<sup>95</sup> From this perspective, the concepts in use play an important and potentially unifying or exclusionary role.

Explicitly recruiting competence that can bridge the two areas was seen as something that can also contribute to strengthening the integration of perspectives. Humanitarian aid is necessarily focused on the short term, and development cooperation has to have a longer perspective:

Everybody is talking about preventing crises and working with links between humanitarian aid and development—and this depends on which donors—but a lot of it has to do with migration as a problem, especially in the EU-context. Those who were our like-minded before are not anymore. Things have changed.<sup>96</sup>

The quote above also reflects conclusions made in previous studies, indicating that the attention to climate-related security risks is simultaneously based on more traditional threat and conflict concerns, as well as the broader orientation towards borderless (human) development and resilience.<sup>97</sup> Both perspectives can inform commitments to climate-related

***Climate-related security risks are simultaneously based on more traditional threat and conflict concerns***

aid for example, or as in the case with the quote above, increased attention to the overlap between humanitarian aid and development cooperation. Sida's German counterpart, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (the German Corporation for International Cooperation), also indicates that the link between climate change and migration has spurred an interest in working in a more integrated way with these issues (e.g. within the New Way of Working), but that it is difficult to work long term and with preventive approaches in fragile contexts.<sup>98</sup>

## VII. Integration conundrums in Swedish development cooperation

The purpose of this study was to analyse how Sida has framed and responded to climate-related security risks since 2015. Focusing on Sida's work with integrating the environment and climate perspective and the conflict perspective, this paper has analysed how the connections between climate and security are framed in central policies, in strategies and by Sida staff. It has also explored how Sida's organization and procedures support integrated work, and highlighted examples of challenges and opportunities that arise when translating policy and strategy into practice. The findings

<sup>94</sup> Interview no. 10, Sida HQ; and Interview no. 13, Embassy.

<sup>95</sup> Interview no. 14, Embassy.

<sup>96</sup> Interview no. 12, Embassy.

<sup>97</sup> Boas and Rothe (note 17), pp. 617–18.

<sup>98</sup> Gustafsson (note 5), pp. 44–46.



are summarized below, beginning with general reflection and followed by framing, organization and response.

The Swedish Government's updated directive to Sida in 2015 implied increased ambitions for integrating the thematic issue areas of environment and climate, conflict and gender. Although Sida does not have an explicit task to work on climate-related security risks, it does have a task to prevent conflict and sustain peace; the work on integration of perspectives is of relevance to the capacity to do both. This study has shown that the updated directive has had a positive effect in terms of creating improved preconditions for integrated work. There are several initiatives being undertaken centrally at Sida HQ, in its different departments and at the embassies, aimed at integrating the two perspectives of environment and climate, and conflict. The country results strategies analysed in this study provide good ground for integrated work, and there is clear interest from interviewed staff in learning more about the overlaps among all the perspectives to improve interventions. The ambitions of perspective integration have started to strengthen Sida's capacity to work with climate-related security risks in terms of work processes and activities. However, working in silos partly remains, and there are some challenges and opportunities associated with this.

***This study has shown that the updated directive has had a positive effect in terms of creating improved preconditions for integrated work***

Overall, there has been an increase in references to integration of perspectives from 2015 and onwards in government directives to Sida, but discussions about combined climate and conflict risks or guidelines relating to the implementation of integration are generally absent. While the references to one policy area by the other in the policy areas' respective central documents are general in character, environment and climate slightly more often raises peace, conflict and security than the other way around, and both areas refer more consistently to gender than to one another. The overlaps and interactions between the two perspectives and policy areas are most clearly highlighted in the country results strategies.

There is a diversity in terms of concepts used at Sida, in policy and in practice. This can be related to the overlap between the two policy areas and the capacity to address climate-related security risks such as the triple nexus, risk and resilience. The understanding and use of these concepts vary depending on, for example, background, policy area and unit. To some degree, this diversity reflects the complexity of the topic in focus; it is evident that the multiple framings cause uncertainties but also have advantages. Internally, the diversity can enable collaboration and cohesion, but the lack of clarity also risks upholding and creating boundaries between environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security. When collaborating with external partners, the diversity enables some flexibility. Different organizations use different concepts, and Sida could adjust its framing to the specific context. This process could benefit from an increased internal clarity of concept definitions, and of their overlap and interrelation.

The organizational preconditions are mixed, the support for integrated work is fragmented, and there are tensions between depth and breadth, and between expert and general knowledge. The approaches to and implementation of an integrated approach seem to differ within Sida depending on policy area (environment and climate, or peace, conflict



and security), level (globally, regionally or bilaterally) and unit (different divisions at Sida and different geographic areas). The resources available for integrated work are limited; this has also been shown by previous studies and evaluations and is not unique to Sida. In-depth expertise is valued in-house and with regard to the help desks used. The present analysis adds to the conclusions of an OECD DAC evaluation of Sida, and points towards the need to strengthen the expertise internally with regard to cross-cutting issues. It could also be of relevance to revisit the instructions of the help desks in terms of their potential contribution to enabling integration.

Reflecting the mixed organizational preconditions, responses at Sida HQ and embassies indicated different levels of integration of, and between, both policy areas. These ranged from a macro-level general awareness of the potential overlaps with a ‘do no harm’ ambition to micro levels of integration where strategies and interventions are adjusted, and synergies are actively sought. Sida’s decentralized model of development is considered both a challenge and an important success factor. While the translation of policy into practice occurs on several levels at Sida, there seems to be room for increased collaboration on operationalization, for example between Sida HQ and embassies as well as between Sida and collaboration partners. This could enable deeper levels of integrated work. Interviewed staff also considered the coordination between humanitarian aid and development cooperation as key for working with the overlap between environment and climate, and peace, conflict and security. At the same time, working with long-term processes can be a significant challenge in fragile contexts.

Considering that a relatively low proportion of climate and environment aid goes to low-income countries (which are the most susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change), it is positive that Sweden’s development cooperation focus is on the most fragile states. In some contexts, Sida is one of few aid actors dealing with environment and climate and an integrated approach; several interviewees suggested that Sweden’s role as capacity-building partner in these contexts could be strengthened and complement other aid actors more strategically. Sida’s focus on fragile contexts provides an important foundation for strengthening adaptive capacity and mitigating climate-related security risks. As such, it also enables contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the double burden of climate change and fragility. An important principle for Sida’s forthcoming efforts is to go beyond the do no harm approach, and prioritize measures that do not occur at the expense of long-term sustainable management of natural resources. To enable this, and improve capacities to address climate-related security risks, additional efforts are required by Sida and other aid actors to ensure that relevant policy areas and actors are developing climate-proof and conflict-sensitive approaches.

***The approaches to and implementation of an integrated approach seem to differ within Sida depending on policy area, level and unit***



## Abbreviations

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
HQ	Headquarters
MFA	Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UN	United Nations



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# FRAMING AND RESPONDING TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS IN SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

VERONICA BRODÉN GYBERG AND MALIN MOBJÖRK

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