

FROM CONFLICT TO COLLABORATION: CO-FUNDING ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTH-CENTRAL SOMALIA

KHEIRA TARIF*

INTRODUCTION

Somalia is experiencing significant impacts of climate change, including higher air temperatures, increased evaporation and more variable inter-annual rainfall (see figure 1), all of which lead to more frequent and severe droughts and floods.¹ These changes have direct consequences for the estimated 72 per cent of the national population that relies on farming and pastoralism.² Floods, droughts and other extreme weather-related events diminish people's capacity to cope with, and limit their potential to adapt to, climate change. Furthermore, in Somalia, climate-related vulnerabilities are compounded by the enduring effects of more than three decades of violent conflict and fragmented governance.

Climate change can indirectly increase the risk of conflict by exacerbating existing tensions between groups and with authorities.³ As the effects of climate change become more pronounced in Somalia, their interaction with social, economic and political realities threatens to create challenges that are complex and difficult to address.⁴ There is thus a strong need for policies and programmes that address climate change and conflict in tandem, but gaps persist in knowledge and evidence to inform actions under such policies and programmes.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Somalia seeks environmental entry points to reduce the incidence of local inter-clan and intra-clan conflicts, which account for 35–40 per cent of reported violence in the country.⁵ One element of the IOM environmental peacebuilding approach is a co-funding mechanism for facilitating collaboration between

¹ World Weather Attribution, 'Human-induced climate change increased drought severity in Horn of Africa', 27 Apr. 2023; and World Bank, *Somalia Climate Risk Review* (World Bank Group: Washington, DC, 2023).

² United Nations Somalia, *Common Country Analysis 2020* (United Nations Somalia: Sep. 2020).

³ Ide, T. et al., 'The future of environmental peace and conflict research', *Environmental Politics*, vol. 32, no. 6 (2023); and Buhaug, H. et al., 'Climate-driven risks to peace over the 21st century', *Climate Risk Management*, vol. 39 (2023).

⁴ Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and SIPRI, 'Somalia', *Climate, Peace and Security Fact Sheet*, Sep. 2023.

⁵ United Nations Somalia, *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021–2025* (United Nations Somalia: Oct. 2020).

* This policy brief is part of a partnership between the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Somalia and SIPRI and funded by the European Union Foreign Policy Instrument.

SUMMARY

● Somalia is experiencing significant impacts of climate change. Its climate-related vulnerabilities are exacerbated by the enduring effects of more than three decades of violent conflict and fragmented governance. As the effects of climate change become more pronounced, their interaction with social, economic and political realities threatens to create challenges that are complex and difficult to address. There is a need for policies and programmes that tackle climate change and conflict in tandem, but gaps persist in knowledge and evidence to inform actions under such policies and programmes.

This SIPRI Policy Brief explores how the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Somalia uses a co-funding mechanism for facilitating collaboration between groups in conflict on addressing shared local priorities. In south-central Somalia, IOM has applied the co-funding mechanism to projects that aim to address local climate-related vulnerabilities, build relationships between communities in conflict and strengthen the role of district councils. This policy brief finds that elements of this approach to project design can support environmental peacebuilding in contexts exposed to climate change and affected by conflict and offers recommendations for organizations and other donors with relevant mandates.

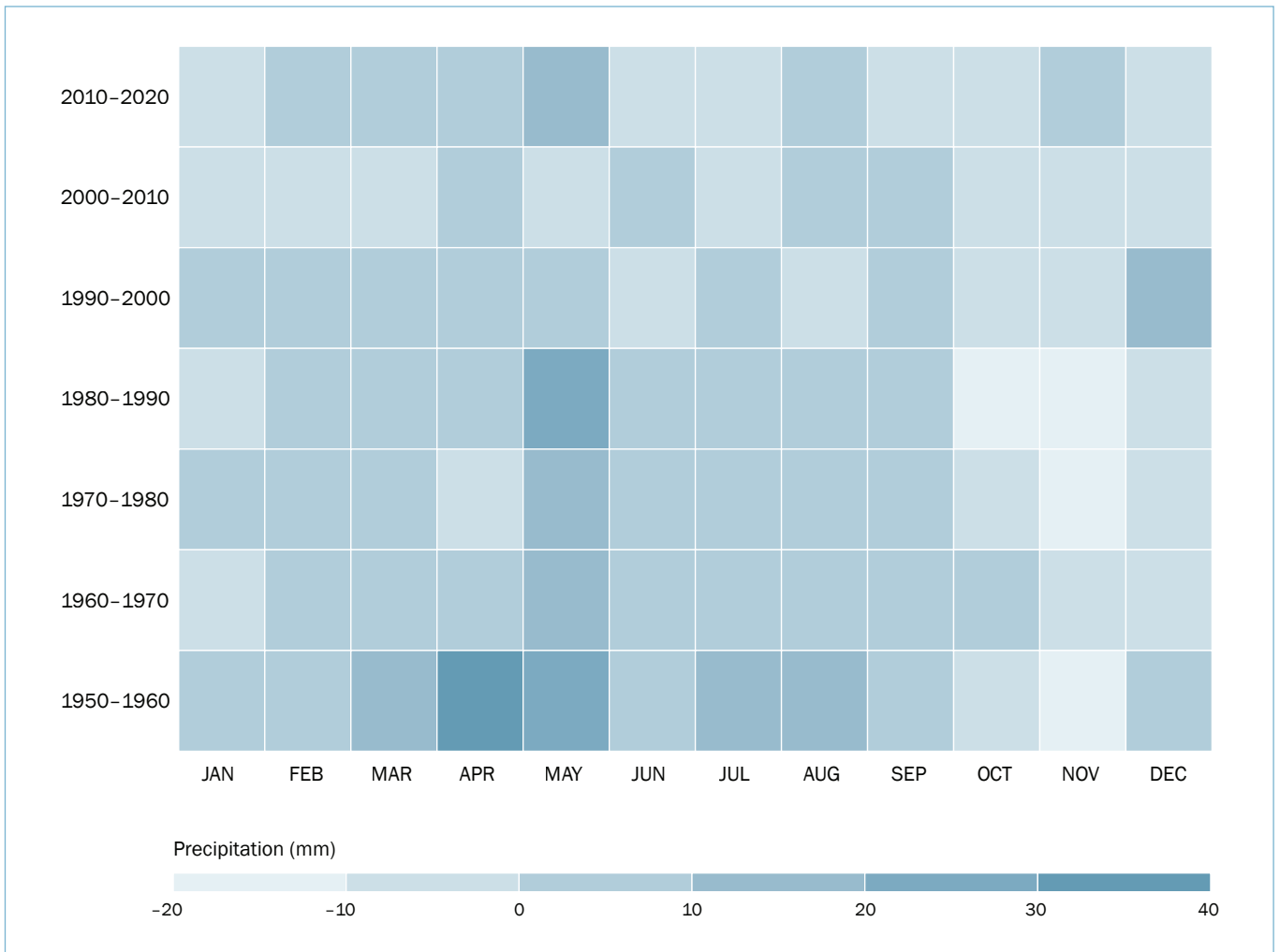


Figure 1. Monthly precipitation trend in Somalia, 1950–2020

Note: The values show monthly rainfall anomaly (change) using a 10-year average, illustrating differences in rainfall across seasons.

Source: World Bank Group, Climate Change Knowledge Portal, ‘Somalia—Current climate: Trends and significant change against natural variability’, accessed 20 Jan. 2024.

groups in conflict on addressing shared local priorities.⁶ The mechanism promotes the joint identification, design and implementation—including raising funds and accessing finance—of suitable projects. In south-central Somalia, IOM has applied the co-funding mechanism to projects that aim to address local climate change-related vulnerabilities, build relationships between communities in conflict and strengthen the role of district councils.

This SIPRI Policy Brief explores the use of the IOM co-funding mechanism in the Federal Member State of Hirshabelle. It introduces theories of environmental peacebuilding and the IOM approach to environmental peacebuilding. It also outlines the co-funding mechanism and elements of project design that can support environmental peacebuilding in contexts exposed to climate change impacts and affected by conflict. The brief

⁶ The IOM co-funding mechanism was previously called the matching grant mechanism.



concludes with four recommendations on co-funding for organizations and other donors with mandates relevant to environmental peacebuilding.⁷

HOW PEACEBUILDING CAN BE SUPPORTED THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL ENTRY POINTS

Environmental issues have been identified as both drivers of violence and conflict, and entry points to collaboration. Environmental peacebuilding encompasses processes that seek to address the environmental impacts of conflict and those that seek to leverage environmental opportunities to improve relations between groups in conflict.⁸ Environmental peacebuilding rests on the assumption that groups in conflict can be incentivized to collaborate on environmental projects that have shared benefits, which in turn strengthens intergroup relationships. Examples of joint environmental initiatives include restoring ecosystems, enabling equitable water access and applying sustainable agricultural practices.⁹

These examples of environmental peacebuilding initiatives echo findings from other areas of peacebuilding research that have identified the implementation of infrastructure projects as an opportunity for engaging in dialogue and building positive ties between parties in conflict.¹⁰ Taken together, research on environmental peacebuilding and on implementation of infrastructure projects suggests that climate change mitigation infrastructure or adaptation initiatives can support peacebuilding processes, including in conflict-affected contexts.¹¹ However, only a small number of case studies have demonstrated the potential for climate action to contribute to building peace.¹²

In Somalia, IOM supports, under the Federal Government's National Stabilization Strategy, the formation of district councils (the most localized form of governance) in areas of the country that have been brought under government control from the non-state armed group Al-Shabab.¹³ In rural areas where pastoralist livelihoods predominate, communities face the twin challenges of managing the effects of climate change and gaining access to limited basic services. These challenges exacerbate the vulnerability and

⁷ This Policy Brief is based on a review of academic research, grey literature and IOM programming documents, as well as interviews with IOM staff. It builds on previous SIPRI research on the IOM approach to addressing climate change and conflict in south-central Somalia: Tarif, K., *Burning Ground: Tackling Climate Change and Conflict in South-central Somalia* (SIPRI: Stockholm, May 2024).

⁸ de Soysa, I., 'Ecoviolence: Shrinking pie, or honey pot?', *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Nov. 2002); Conca, K. and Dabelko, G. D., *Environmental Peacemaking* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Johns Hopkins University Press: Washington, DC/Baltimore, MD, 2002); and Dresse, A. et al., 'Environmental peacebuilding: Towards a theoretical framework', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 54, no. 1 (Mar. 2019).

⁹ Johnson, M. F., Rodríguez, L. A. and Quijano Hoyos, M., 'Intrastate environmental peacebuilding: A review of the literature', *World Development*, vol. 137 (Jan. 2021).

¹⁰ Bachmann, J. and Schouten, P., 'Concrete approaches to peace: Infrastructure as peacebuilding', *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 2 (Mar. 2018), p. 390.

¹¹ Wennmann, A., *Pragmatic Peacebuilding for Climate Change Adaptation in Cities*, Peaceworks no. 191 (United States Institute of Peace: Washington, DC, Sep. 2023).

¹² Gaston, E. et al., *Climate-Security and Peacebuilding*, Thematic Review (United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research: New York, Apr. 2023).

¹³ For information on the National Stabilization Strategy see United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 'Community recovery and extension of state authority and accountability (CRESTA/A)', accessed 25 July 2024.

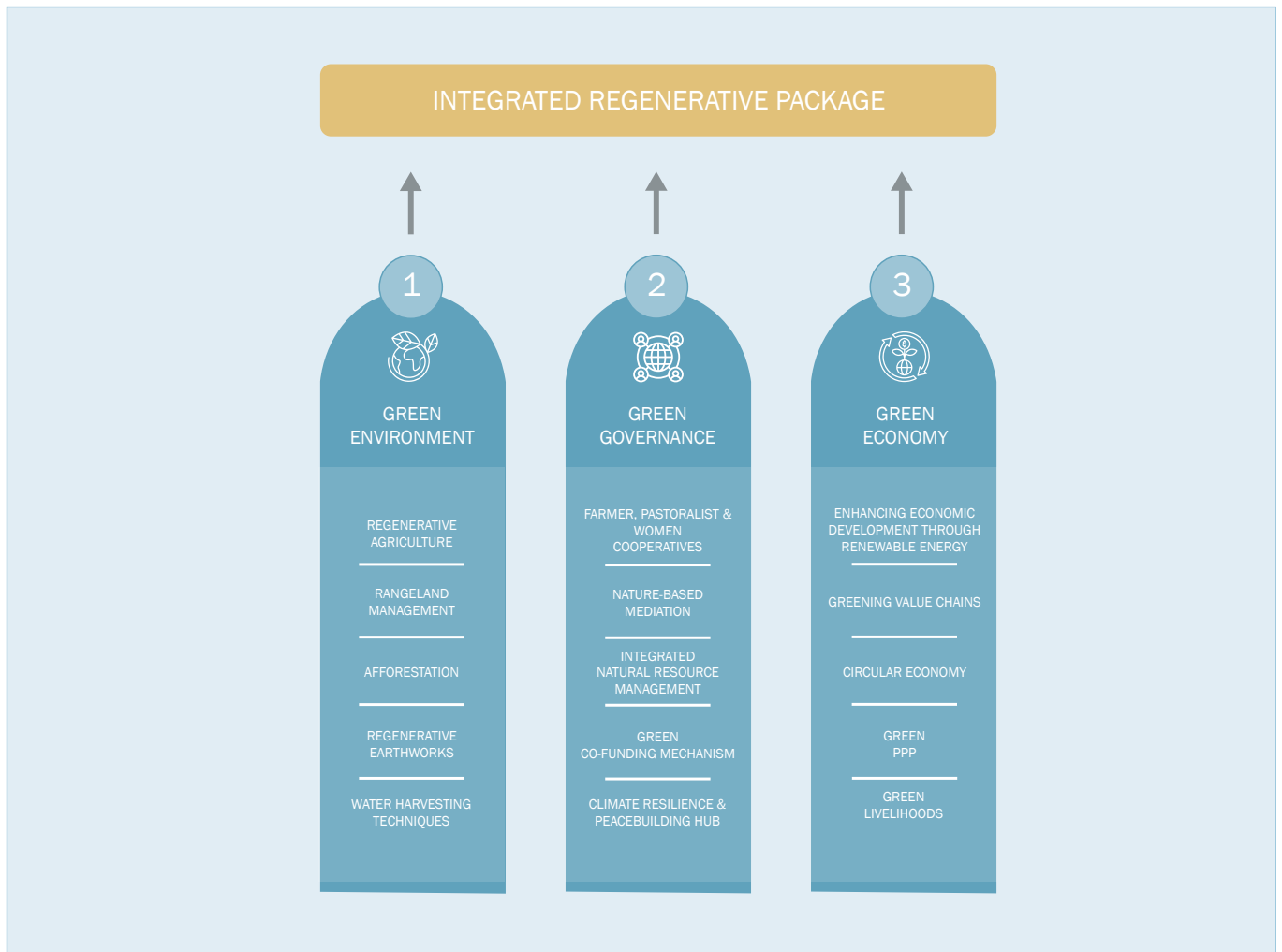


Figure 2. The environmental peacebuilding approach of the International Organization for Migration in Somalia

PPP = public-private partnership.

Source: IOM Somalia, 2024.

diminish the coping capacity of communities, as well as increase the risk of maladaptation, including conflict, occurring.

In south-central Somalia, IOM has identified that environmental degradation contributes to, and is exacerbated by, climate change, and is one of the drivers of local conflicts.¹⁴ For example, as vegetation cover and freshwater sources are impacted by drought and communities concentrate their resource use in smaller areas, the risk of conflicts around access to grazing lands and water points increases.¹⁵ IOM has also determined that conflicts arise owing to changing patterns in human mobility: as pastoral livelihoods are challenged by the effects of climate change, some pastoralists move from rural areas to semi-permanent and permanent settlements in search of alternative livelihoods. In some cases, pastoralists who no longer practice the livelihood resort to cutting down trees for the production and sale of firewood in towns. The resulting environmental degradation leads to conflicts among host

¹⁴ IOM, 'Description of action: Climate-adaptive stabilization in newly liberated areas of Somalia', Unpublished project document, [n.d.].

¹⁵ Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and SIPRI (note 4).



communities, pastoralists and ‘pastoral dropouts’ (i.e. people who have opted to forego, completely or partially, nomadic pastoralism in favour of sedentary livelihoods).¹⁶

The dynamics observed in south-central Somalia reflect research on how environmental issues can act as drivers of violence and conflict and how the adverse effects of climate change can increase the risk of insecurity.¹⁷ Research also identifies climate-sensitive peacebuilding as a means of supporting ‘bottom-up’ peacebuilding through its support of climate change adaptation and resilience-building.¹⁸ Furthermore, the environmental peacebuilding literature recognizes that well-designed approaches to coping with or managing environmental issues can support conflict prevention, mitigation, resolution and recovery.¹⁹

Based on its conflict analysis, the IOM environmental peacebuilding approach covers the following three areas: (a) ‘green environment’ (developing regenerative and nature-based solutions to restore environmental health and alleviate the adverse effects of environmental degradation and climate change on nature and communities); (b) ‘green governance’ (strengthening environmental governance to support regeneration and improve sustainable natural resource sharing); and (c) ‘green economy’ (supporting more resilient and environmentally sustainable rural livelihoods and economies in south-central Somalia).²⁰ Project activities under these areas are designed in integrated packages that are intended to reinforce one another by creating positive feedback loops between different activities in the same target location (see figure 2). IOM applies the co-funding mechanism to facilitate joint ownership of the design and implementation of these activities by different groups in the community.

HOW THE CO-FUNDING MECHANISM WORKS

The IOM co-funding mechanism is intended to facilitate the building of two forms of trust in areas recently brought under government control in south-central Somalia: (a) horizontal trust between clans in conflict, through their collaboration in the design and implementation of projects with shared benefits; and (b) vertical trust in government, through its delivery of services that address local needs.

IOM Somalia’s Community Stabilization Unit supports the formation of district councils in areas under government control with the aim of convening community leaders and members to define the community’s needs and draft action plans for addressing them. IOM then funds local businesses to carry out the projects identified, delivering goods, services or infrastructure (such

¹⁶ IOM staff, Interview with author, 27 June 2024. These findings are reflected in an IOM-commissioned field-based context analysis of the needs related to, and opportunities for, environmental peacebuilding and the restoration of trust between communities and local leaders in Beer-Gadid, Mataban Town, QodQod and Takaraale.

¹⁷ de Soysa (note 8); Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A., *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, Policy Research Working Paper no. 2355 (World Bank: Washington, DC, May 2000); and Buhaug et al. (note 3).

¹⁸ Abdenur, A. E. and Tripathi, S., ‘Local approaches to climate-sensitive peacebuilding: Lessons from Afghanistan’, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2022).

¹⁹ Conca and Dabelko (note 8); Dresse et al. (note 8); and Ide, T. et al., ‘The past and future(s) of environmental peacebuilding’, *International Affairs*, vol. 97, no. 1 (Jan. 2021), p. 3.

²⁰ IOM Somalia, ‘Environmental peacebuilding’, 2023.



as schools and health clinics).²¹ The co-funding mechanism was designed to strengthen community ownership in planning and implementing projects by including members of the community in fundraising and in the selection of local businesses to carry out the projects.²²

The conception and implementation of projects to which the co-funding mechanism is applied is led by community-based committees and dedicated community implementation units convened by IOM field teams. Technical experts in these teams facilitate community dialogue aimed at defining priorities and developing action plans. The district-level authorities are invited to assess and approve the priorities and to allocate the land needed for a project.²³

In addition, IOM field teams support the community implementation units in outlining the budget, aims and expected benefits of a project, which are then published on a public crowdfunding platform, Sokaab.²⁴ While members of the community lead the fundraising efforts for a project, district council officials also participate.²⁵ Once a project has reached its funding goal, IOM matches the community-raised funds on the basis of a ratio system, contributing more to projects with a wider geographical scope, more diverse clan participation or broader community benefits.²⁶

Local businesses are then invited to bid on the projects; the community implementation units participate with IOM field teams in analysing the bids and selecting the successful provider. The community pays the first instalment to the contracted business after assessing that the quality and delivery of the project matches the bill of quantities, and the IOM pays the following instalments. Once completed, the co-funded project is wholly owned by the community and local government.²⁷

Similar approaches to matching funds for projects have been used by other organizations, for example by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to stimulate the investment of remittances in agriculture, rural development and resilience-building.²⁸ However, the co-funding mechanism applied by IOM Somalia as part of its environmental peacebuilding approach in Hirshabelle is unique in that it is also intended to incentivize collaboration between groups in conflict through joint identification and implementation of—including raising funds and accessing finance for—projects that address shared needs. The co-funding mechanism offers lessons on how projects can be designed to further climate action and peacebuilding in mutually reinforcing ways, including in conflict-affected contexts.

²¹ See e.g. IOM Somalia, 'The matching grant mechanism: IOM's co-funding scheme', YouTube, 26 May 2023.

²² IOM staff (note 16); IOM, 'Matching Grant IOM Somalia overview', 18 Oct. 2022.

²³ IOM staff (note 16).

²⁴ See the Sokaab website, <<https://www.sokaab.com>>.

²⁵ IOM staff (note 16).

²⁶ IOM staff (note 16).

²⁷ IOM staff (note 16).

²⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition, 'Matching grant programmes: An effective approach to channel remittances into sustainable investment in agribusiness?', Report of the online consultation no. 177, 2023.



HOW THE CO-FUNDING MECHANISM CAN SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING

Environmental peacebuilding research has found that improved natural resource management can reduce conflict by facilitating collaboration and can support peace outcomes by reducing intergroup biases and building relationships of trust.²⁹ By seeking to reduce climate-related vulnerabilities through the development of infrastructure and services, climate action can create shared benefits for, and support positive interactions between, groups in conflict.³⁰

SIPRI's research identifies three ways in which the design of IOM co-funding mechanism projects can support climate action and peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts, namely, by (a) contributing to reducing vulnerabilities and resolving conflicts, (b) building horizontal and vertical trust, and (c) strengthening community-led climate adaptation. The remainder of this section provides findings in each of these three areas from ongoing IOM work in Hirshabelle (see figure 3).

Reducing climate change-related vulnerabilities and resolving conflicts

In recently recovered areas of Hirshabelle, communities face the dual challenges of climate change and poor public services arising from weak governance. These challenges increase both people's vulnerability to climate shocks and the risk that they will use force to secure their access to the natural resources, such as pasture and water, needed to support farming and pastoralism.³¹ While this reflects research showing how environmental issues can drive violence, it also highlights addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience to climate change as entry points to reducing conflict.³²

In Hirshabelle, IOM uses the co-funding mechanism to foster collaboration on natural resource management in order to reduce the incidence of resource-related conflicts. For example, in Mataban District, where IOM identified pastoralists' encroachment on farming land as a driver of local resource conflicts, field teams worked with communities to identify opportunities to strengthen livelihood security for both farmers and pastoralists. IOM supported a farmers' cooperative by co-funding improved fencing for better crop protection and by training farmers in regenerative agriculture to support the climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods. At the same time, IOM supported pastoralist cooperatives by co-funding two livestock markets, which provided a space for different pastoralist groups to come together in the interest of improving their income opportunities. The co-funded livestock markets also linked the livelihoods of pastoralists

²⁹ Krampe, F., Hegazi, F. and VanDeveer, S. D., 'Sustaining peace through better resource governance: Three potential mechanisms for environmental peacebuilding', *World Development*, vol. 144 (Aug. 2021).

³⁰ Bachmann and Schouten (note 10), p. 390; Fantini, C. et al., *Infrastructure for Peacebuilding: The Role of Infrastructure in Tackling the Underlying Drivers of Fragility* (United Nations Office for Project Services: Copenhagen, Sep. 2020); and van Tongeren, P. et al., 'The evolving landscape of infrastructures for peace', *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, vol. 7, no. 3 (Dec. 2012).

³¹ Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and SIPRI (note 4).

³² de Soysa (note 8); Collier and Hoeffler (note 17); Buhaug et al. (note 3); Conca and Dabelko (note 8); Dresse et al. (note 8); and Ide et al. (note 19), p. 3.



Figure 3. Map of Somalia showing areas of intervention by the International Organization for Migration in the Federal Member State of Hirshabelle

Source: IOM Somalia, 2024.

with those of local farmers as they provided the opportunity for farmers to produce and sell livestock fodder during the agricultural low season.³³

This example of a co-funding mechanism project shows how the design of such projects can create incentives for parties in conflict to shift towards collaboration. The types of project selected by communities in Mataban point to the overlap between environmental peacebuilding and livelihood diversification and resilience-building, particularly in contexts where the local economy relies on agriculture and pastoralism.³⁴ While the co-funding mechanism was designed to facilitate collaboration and reduce conflict between clans, the support it provided to communities in Mataban

³³ IOM staff (note 16).

³⁴ Johnson, Rodríguez and Quijano Hoyos (note 9).



in terms of promoting sustainable agricultural practices and diversifying income opportunities exemplifies the potential of environmental peacebuilding approaches to generate co-benefits.³⁵ Co-benefits are not limited to the agropastoral sector—co-funding mechanism projects have also led to unintended economic boosts in other sectors. For example, in Beer-Gadid, in Mataban District, members of the community opened a hotel to accommodate business travellers to a new livestock market, creating a source of employment.³⁶

IOM asks that community representatives identify priorities within the environmental scope of a co-funding mechanism project. This request can be a source of disappointment for the community if it sees its priority as, for example, building a school, and can thus constitute a challenge for IOM field teams in implementing projects that support environmental peacebuilding. To encourage communities to identify environment-related priorities, field teams deliver training on climate change, environmental health and environmental degradation, as well as on the conflicts that can emerge from their interaction.³⁷ IOM supports the identification of community priorities by sharing knowledge and promulgating norms for community management of the environment and of natural resources, which research suggests is one way for international actors to make progress in environmental peacebuilding in post-conflict contexts.³⁸

The insights from Hirshabelle indicate how the design of co-funding mechanism projects can create shared incentives for clans to work together and broad economic benefits for the community. By seeking to address climate change vulnerabilities that lead to conflict, the co-funding mechanism offers lessons for environmental peacebuilding approaches. Although aligning community priorities with activities that fall under the scope of environmental entry points can be a challenge, knowledge-sharing can support community buy-in.

Building trust among clans and trust in local governments

The IOM co-funding mechanism aims to build horizontal trust between clans in conflict and vertical trust between communities and authorities through collaboration on shared projects that address local needs.³⁹ The design of co-funding mechanism projects can support environmental peacebuilding that engages with political ecologies or the economic structures and power relations that influence people's experience of environmental problems.⁴⁰

The co-funding mechanism may contribute to improving relationships between groups by facilitating the convening of forums, committees and cooperatives to make joint decisions on local priorities. These forums, committees and cooperatives can reduce the risk of conflict in two ways: (a) by

³⁵ Morales-Muñoz, H. et al., 'Co-benefits through coordination of climate action and peacebuilding: A system dynamics model', *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, vol. 17, no. 3 (Dec. 2022).

³⁶ IOM staff, Email correspondence with author, 12 May 2024.

³⁷ IOM staff (note 16).

³⁸ Krampe, Hegazi and VanDeveer (note 29).

³⁹ IOM Somalia (note 20).

⁴⁰ Ide, T., 'The dark side of environmental peacebuilding', *World Development*, vol. 127 (Mar. 2020). See also Bruch, C. and Woome, A., *Toolkit on Monitoring and Evaluation of Environmental Peacebuilding* (Environmental Law Institute: Washington, DC, Nov. 2023).



offering a space for clans to discuss and address shared challenges before they escalate, and (b) by improving the representation and decision-making power of marginalized groups such as minority clans.⁴¹ The IOM stipulates that women should make up 30 per cent of the membership of community-based committees that are formed as part of co-funding mechanism projects.⁴² Co-funding mechanism projects also seek to support women's participation in local planning committees and cooperatives and fundraising efforts, including for economic activities traditionally led by women. For example, during the implementation of the IOM Somalia Deegan Bile project (January 2022 to June 2023) in the Federal Member State of Galmudug, local officials and female university students in Abudwaq District conducted joint fundraising for a co-funding mechanism project, with the participation of the public servants demonstrating the government's support of the young women's engagement in the project.⁴³

The co-funding mechanism also facilitates community engagement with district council officials, thereby connecting community-level peacebuilding with local power dynamics. Environmental peacebuilding research has found that formal authorities can improve people's perceptions of their legitimacy through climate action that is implemented through locally legitimate structures and delivers tangible benefits to local communities.⁴⁴ One challenge for decision makers involved in transitioning economies in order to achieve climate action targets is the risk that significant shifts in resource extraction, land use and the distribution of financial resources will lead to negative societal impacts, reinforcing existing, or creating new, inequalities. This risk is higher in conflict-affected contexts because of existing political tensions and fragmented governance.⁴⁵

Research has shown that international organizations can support effective governance by working in a context-specific manner with district councils and local customary, religious and business groups.⁴⁶ Many efforts to strengthen governance in Somalia have focused on improving the capacity of the government to provide security, but the co-funding mechanism projects in Hirshabelle offer lessons on how environmental governance can be strengthened. In Mataban, for example, the District Commissioner organized the district into subdistricts that would contribute funds to a co-funding mechanism project. This new role for the district council—collecting funds for providing public services—can support the development of the social contract between citizens and the state.⁴⁷

Cooperation with local authorities is a prerequisite for organizations that are implementing environmental peacebuilding projects based on the co-funding mechanism. A degree of political stability, to ensure government support over time, is another requirement but this is a significant challenge in conflict-affected contexts. Peacebuilding actors have identified that engag-

⁴¹ IOM staff (note 16).

⁴² IOM staff, Email correspondence with author, 25 Aug. 2024.

⁴³ IOM staff (note 16); and Tarif (note 7).

⁴⁴ Krampe, F., 'Empowering peace: Service provision and state legitimacy in Nepal's peace-building process', *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2016).

⁴⁵ Buhaug et al. (note 3).

⁴⁶ Menkhaus, K., 'State failure, state-building, and prospects for a "functional failed state" in Somalia', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 656, no. 1 (Nov. 2014).

⁴⁷ IOM staff (note 16).



ing with formal authorities, working in contexts of high levels of insecurity and operating without legal frameworks are among the main challenges in implementing community-based peacebuilding initiatives in Somalia.⁴⁸

Despite these challenges, the co-funding mechanism offers insights into how environmental peacebuilding can contribute to enhancing social cohesion, strengthening the social contract between citizens and the state, and working towards inclusive and effective governance.

Strengthening community-led climate change adaptation

Co-funding mechanism projects can be designed to support communities living in conflict-affected areas to lead their own recovery efforts by moving away from traditional models of humanitarian assistance.⁴⁹ In its support of community-led ownership of projects, the co-funding mechanism offers an example of how to reduce the risk that climate action will unintentionally leave communities more vulnerable to climate change.⁵⁰

Co-funding mechanism projects improve communities' access to technical information and skills for implementing climate actions and can therefore strengthen local capacities to adapt to the effects of climate change. When based on local dialogue about environmental priorities, the projects promote tailored approaches to climate action and strong ownership of processes and outcomes.⁵¹ By including different groups in the community and district councils, dialogues facilitated by the co-funding mechanism help to reduce the risk that climate action will inadvertently create new forms of marginalization, insecurity and conflict.⁵²

One key feature relating to local ownership of co-funding mechanism projects is their emphasis on crowdfunding and community-led fundraising. Through the co-funding mechanism, target communities in south-central Somalia raised approximately \$500 000 for joint project implementation between 2021 and 2024.⁵³ As of August 2024, 38 of the 40 co-funding mechanism projects implemented in south-central Somalia had successfully raised the funds needed for their goals.⁵⁴ The fundraising component of these projects may have benefited from a close link with *qaraan*, a customary fundraising and cost-sharing mechanism, and support from the Somali diaspora, which sends an estimated \$1.7 billion in remittances to the country each year, of which \$130–200 million supports humanitarian and development

⁴⁸ Saferworld, Conflict Dynamics International (CDI) and Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law Secretariat (KPSRL), *Sustainable Community Approaches to Peacebuilding in Securitised Environments: Case Study of Somalia*, Learning Paper (Saferworld, CDI and KPSRL: Feb. 2020).

⁴⁹ IOM staff (note 16).

⁵⁰ Dabelko, G. D. et al., *Navigating a Just and Peaceful Transition: Environment of Peace (Part 3)* (SIPRI: Stockholm, Dec. 2022); Schipper, E. L. F., 'Maladaptation: When adaptation to climate change goes very wrong', *One Earth*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Oct. 2020); Swatuk, L. A. et al., 'The "boomerang effect": Insights for improved climate action', *Climate and Development*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2021); and Dabelko, G. D. et al. (eds), *Backdraft: The Conflict Potential of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation*, Environmental Change and Security Program Report vol. 14, no. 2 (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Washington, DC, 2013).

⁵¹ Krampe, F., 'Ownership and inequalities: Exploring UNEP's Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding Program', *Sustainability Science*, vol. 16 (2021).

⁵² Ben-Shmuel, A. T. and Halle, S., 'Beyond greenwashing: Prioritizing environmental justice in conflict-affected settings', *Environment and Security*, vol. 1, no. 3–4 (Dec. 2023).

⁵³ IOM staff (note 42).

⁵⁴ IOM staff (note 42).



initiatives.⁵⁵ Communities in conflict-affected contexts have very limited access to climate finance despite being highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change; the co-funding mechanism thus constitutes an alternative means of raising funds for urgent climate action.⁵⁶

IOM Somalia incurs an administrative cost for the participatory design of co-funding mechanism projects. While the projects must comply with the same financial and legal requirements as projects implemented directly by IOM, these requirements are significantly more challenging to meet when community representatives are tasked with collecting and completing the relevant documentation. Low levels of literacy and limited access to technology in rural communities in Hirshabelle are notable challenges, and community representatives must sometimes travel long distances to nearby towns to print and sign the necessary paperwork.⁵⁷

Furthermore, the emphasis on community ownership of co-funding mechanism projects means that securing the buy-in needed from all stakeholders to implement a project successfully can take a long time. With the project cycles defined by IOM donors already often very short, the emphasis on community ownership can increase the administrative burden and time pressure on IOM implementing teams.⁵⁸

Despite these challenges, the co-funding mechanism offers valuable lessons for enhancing local ownership of environmental peacebuilding. By leveraging financial resources and engaging communities in inclusive dialogue, it may support tailored climate action. The success of community-led fundraising suggests that this approach has potential in other conflict-affected contexts with limited access to climate finance.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON CO-FUNDING ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING

Experience with the IOM co-funding mechanism provides insights into designing and implementing environmental peacebuilding projects. The co-funding approach involves processes that aim to enable and incentivize collaboration across political and community divides, making it suitable for supporting climate action projects in conflict-affected contexts. Evidence of the kind gained with the co-funding mechanism is crucial to the successful implementation of such projects. As the effects of climate change become more pronounced, there is a strong need for policies and programmes that address the requirements of communities facing the twin challenges of climate change and conflict.

⁵⁵ Majid, N., Abdirahman, K. and Hassan, S., *Remittances and Vulnerability in Somalia: Assessing Sources, Uses and Delivery Mechanisms* (World Bank Group: Washington, DC, Nov. 2017); World Bank, 'Personal remittances, received (current US\$)—Somalia', 2022 data, accessed 9 Nov. 2023; and Hammond, L. et al., *Cash and Compassion: The Role of the Somali Diaspora in Relief, Development and Peace-building* (United Nations Development Programme: New York, 2011).

⁵⁶ Cao, Y. et al., *Exploring the Conflict Blind Spots in Climate Adaptation Finance*, Synthesis Report (SPARC: London, Sep. 2021); Reda, D. and Wong, C., *Climate Finance for Sustaining Peace: Making Climate Finance Work for Conflict-affected and Fragile Contexts* (United Nations Development Programme: New York, 2021); and Bedelian, C. et al., *Locally-led Adaptation: Moving from Principles to Practice in the Water Sector* (Danish Institute for International Studies: Copenhagen, Apr. 2024).

⁵⁷ IOM staff (note 16).

⁵⁸ IOM staff (note 16).



In south-central Somalia's Federal Member State of Hirshabelle, IOM has used the co-funding mechanism as an environmental peacebuilding approach that leverages environmental entry points to address conflict. However, co-funding mechanism projects can also create opportunities to realize co-benefits for rural economies. Connecting local peace agreements with broader reconciliation activities has previously been identified as a factor of success in peacebuilding in Somalia, and the co-funding mechanism may offer a means of enhancing the sustainability of dialogue outcomes by linking them to climate action.⁵⁹ Project design based on the co-funding mechanism thus has relevance to a wide range of environmental peacebuilding initiatives in Somalia and other conflict-affected contexts. Four recommendations emerge for organizations and other donors with mandates relevant to environmental peacebuilding, as discussed in the remainder of this section.

Explore the potential for context-specific co-funding mechanisms to support environmental peacebuilding

The co-funding mechanism offers an example of context-specific project design and flexible project implementation. In conflict-affected contexts, it offers two advantages over directly funded projects: (a) minimizing the conflict potential of climate action, and (b) applying an adaptive approach to climate action that places community expectations first. Experience with the co-funding mechanism suggests that tailored local initiatives can also result in broader unintended but positive effects when they are integrated effectively. Organizations and donors with a mandate to implement programmes and projects in communities that are vulnerable to the effects of climate change should explore similar funding models to support inclusive local ownership of environmental peacebuilding processes.

Explore options for facilitating flexible and adaptive co-funded environmental peacebuilding in conflict-affected and fragile areas

The co-funding mechanism can create incentives for cooperation between groups in conflict. As an environmental peacebuilding tool, it can contribute to reducing the incidence of violent conflict, building trust among groups and improving community resilience to climate change. Establishing a co-funded project involves social processes that take time to develop and ensuring its success requires different groups in the community to work together. Environmental processes addressed by this approach also take time to unfold, which has implications for reporting and monitoring within short programmatic periods. Organizations and donors that already support pilot and catalyst projects should review best practices and share lessons learned in supporting flexible and adaptive programming in order to facilitate the implementation of co-funded environmental peacebuilding initiatives.

⁵⁹ Somalia Stability Fund, *Durable Local Reconciliation in Somalia: Factors that Enhance Durability and Success* (Somalia Stability Fund, Nairobi: Nov. 2021).



Invest in building the capacity of field teams to design and implement projects based on the co-funding mechanism

The peacebuilding potential of the co-funding mechanism relies on the capacity of the project implementing team to mediate effectively between groups in conflict and between communities and local governments. The approach requires a strong locally embedded team that can monitor processes, relay information between stakeholders and support the identification of projects tailored to the community concerned. Organizations and donors should build the capacity of field teams to develop co-funding approaches that are based on granular context, conflict analysis and identified environmental entry points. They should also support field teams by improving their technical knowledge of climate-related security risks and nature-based solutions and their skills in identifying peace dividends and the co-benefits arising from environmental peacebuilding projects.

Support research into the potential for diaspora remittances to contribute to climate action and peacebuilding

The IOM co-funding mechanism has successfully supported communities in Somalia in raising funds for, and implementing, their chosen projects, including by connecting communities with the Somali diaspora. The approach shows how communities in fragile and conflict-affected areas can mobilize financial resources to close existing gaps, that is, by engaging with diaspora groups, and how, in turn, diaspora groups can maximize their remittances in support of climate action and peacebuilding. Organizations and donors should support evidence-based research into how diaspora remittances can be used for environmental peacebuilding initiatives and how this type of funding can be practically supported with transparent financial services in conflict-affected contexts.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kheira Tarif (Algeria/United Kingdom) is a Researcher in the SIPRI Climate Change and Risk Programme. She conducts research and policy advice on climate change, violent conflict and peacebuilding, working with governments, peace operations and multilateral organizations.



**STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL
PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Signalistgatan 9
SE-169 72 Solna, Sweden
Telephone: +46 8 655 97 00
Email: sipri@sipri.org
Internet: www.sipri.org



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