

# Youth in climate, peace and security, and environmental peacebuilding

## Cohort 4 of the 2025 Peacebuilding Fund Thematic Review on Youth, Peace and Security

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*This research findings in this brief stem from a larger research study into youth-focused peacebuilding programming, the [2025 Peacebuilding Fund Thematic Review on Youth, Peace and Security](#). The research assessed 41 projects supported by the Peacebuilding Fund between 2018 and 2022, with analysis organized into 4 cohorts examining specific practice areas or types of youth programming. This research brief reflects the findings and material from the Thematic Review as they relate to the fourth cohort, on youth in climate, peace and security, and other environmental peacebuilding, and also incorporates additional material developed in the course of the research.*

## Introduction

The Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) and the Climate, Peace and Security (CPS) agenda have both gained increasing attention and policy prominence in recent years. The landmark Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on YPS recognized the important contribution of youth for the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.<sup>2</sup> Since then, taking the YPS agenda forward has been a key priority not only at the policy level but in programming across the United Nations (UN) system and its partner organizations. Within the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in particular, the introduction of a Youth Promotion Initiative (YPI) funding window (an annual competitive funding call related to youth empowerment and inclusion) in 2016 was a way to encourage more dedicated programming on youth and peacebuilding.<sup>3</sup>

Over the same period of time, there has been increasing attention to CPS. While there is insufficient evidence to establish a direct causal effect between climate change and rates of conflict or violence, an evolving consensus frames climate change as a critical “risk multiplier” that can

compound existing vulnerabilities and drivers of fragility and conflict. This idea of climate or environmental change as a risk multiplier can be particularly important for youth, who in many communities are more vulnerable to the economic shocks that might be exacerbated or precipitated by major weather events or other environmental changes.

There are many reasons to focus on the intersection of youth and climate in the peacebuilding space – including young people’s global leadership on climate advocacy, the particular vulnerabilities that youth may face as a result of climate change, and also the opportunities that youth engagement in climate adaptation and mitigation may bring. In addition, because natural resources issues often relate to community livelihoods, it is a key area for considering socioeconomic empowerment strategies in youth programming. Despite these natural overlaps, programming at the intersection of these two priority areas is very much an emerging area.<sup>4</sup> This research brief will help advance this stream of work by identifying emerging best practices and lessons with regard to 12 peacebuilding projects supported by the PBF related to climate dynamics or other environmental peacebuilding themes.

# Methodology

The research for this brief was conducted as part of the broader research for the [2025 Peacebuilding Fund Thematic Review on Youth, Peace and Security](#). It builds on the [2023 Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review](#), which considered some youth-focused programming, but not as the primary focus.<sup>5</sup> PBF Thematic Reviews are an annual learning exercise that take stock of a set of PBF-supported projects over the previous five years, with a view to contributing to learning for the PBF and its partners, ranging from programming best practices to guidance on future directions. The 2025 Thematic Review focuses on the overall theme of youth in peacebuilding, and how PBF support has helped advance the YPS agenda, especially as it relates to the YPS pillar on youth participation. To assess this, the research considered 41 projects approved for PBF funding between 2018 and 2022, and assessed them through 4 cohorts focusing on specific areas of practice or themes within youth programming. This brief focuses on the 12 projects in the fourth of these cohorts – those focused on youth in climate- and environment-related peacebuilding.

For each project, the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) research team analysed all available project documents (ProDocs), evaluations and information, and also conducted semi-structured interviews with staff from the Peacebuilding Support Office, which manages the PBF, the PBF Secretariats in relevant countries, the implementing partners for the cohort projects, and other UN staff, government officials and civil society organizations (including youth-led organizations) in the countries where projects are implemented. This was supplemented by field research trips to three countries – Central African Republic (CAR), The Gambia and Guinea. These included site visits to projects relevant to this cohort.

The research methodology was slightly different for this cohort compared to the other three within the Thematic Review. Because youth engagement in climate and environmental work is still a much more recent area of interest (for both the PBF and for other partners and peacebuilders), there was a relatively small number of projects to choose from. For that reason, the research for this cohort involved 26 additional interviews with those who work on youth and climate initiatives outside of the PBF (61 interviews in total). This included UN and non-UN climate specialists, climate youth activists, representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations working in the climate and youth space, and experts in climate funding mechanisms and international financial institutions.

At the start of the research, four key research areas or themes of interest were identified, based on the research questions for the 2025 Thematic Review and on the areas identified to be of greatest interest at the intersection of youth, climate/environment and peacebuilding. These were:

- Identifying common types of programming, or programming modalities, that have sought to engage youth in climate-related and/or environmental peacebuilding.
- Exploring how youth engagement in environmental peacebuilding linked with or provided greater opportunities for socioeconomic empowerment strategies in youth programming.
- Identifying how climate or environmental peacebuilding might provide co-benefits or entry points for enhancing youth participation.
- Identifying how youth inclusion and participation might enhance climate, peace and security objectives.

# Overview of projects

Key information	Year Approved	Name	Implementing partners*
Burkina Faso <a href="#">PBF/IRF-446</a> (YPI) \$1,500,000 2022–2023	2021	Facilitation de l'accès à la terre et participation des jeunes à la prévention et la gestion des conflits fonciers dans les régions de la Boucle du Mouhoun et des Hauts Bassins	FAO, UN-Habitat

Key information	Year Approved	Name	Implementing partners*
CAR <a href="#">PBF/IRF-304</a> \$1,500,000 2019–2021	2019	Renforcement du relèvement et de réintégration des femmes et des filles grâce à une agriculture résiliente au changement climatique pour instaurer la paix et la réconciliation en RCA après conflit	FAO, UN Women
Chad <a href="#">PBF/TCD/A-1</a> \$2,488,906 2018–2020	2018	Projet de consolidation de la paix à travers l'adaptation au changement climatique et la résilience des moyens d'existence des populations de la région du lac Tchad	FAO, IOM, UNHCR
Côte d'Ivoire <a href="#">PBF/IRF-259</a> (YPI) \$1,500,000 2018–2020	2018	Participation des jeunes à la gestion durable des ressources forestières pour le renforcement de la cohésion sociale dans la région Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire	UNDP, IOM
Côte d'Ivoire <a href="#">PBF/CIV/A-5</a> \$2,503,800 2020–2023	2020	Consolidation de la paix dans la zone frontalière du nord-est de la Côte d'Ivoire, par le biais d'une gestion participative et planifiée des ressources naturelles	FAO, IOM, UNEP
The Gambia <a href="#">PBF/GMB/B-2</a> \$1,700,000 2020–2022	2019	Climate conflict: Strengthening community coping mechanisms against risks of climate-induced conflict and minimizing gender-related vulnerabilities and tensions in The Gambia	ITC, UNFPA, WFP
Honduras <a href="#">PBF/IRF-435</a> (YPI) \$1,500,000 2021–2023	2021	Prevenir y gestionar la conflictividad social vinculada a la tierra y territorio que enfrentan las juventudes campesinas e indígenas en Honduras.	FAO, OHCHR
Mali <a href="#">PBF/MLI/C-1</a> \$2,500,000 2022–2024	2021	Soutien à l'auto-emploi de la jeunesse rurale, vecteur de paix et de cohésion sociale au Mali	FAO, IOM, UNESCO
Mauritania <a href="#">PBF/IRF-441</a> \$1,500,000 2021–2023	2021	Consolidation de la “paix verte” en Mauritanie: appui à la coexistence pacifique entre les jeunes hommes et femmes réfugiées et des communautés d'accueil dans la région du Hodh El Chargui en Mauritanie	UNDP, UNHCR
Niger <a href="#">PBF/IRF-462</a> (YPI) \$1,500,000 2022–2023	2021	La jeunesse nigérienne en action : Soutenir le rôle actif des jeunes femmes et hommes pour la consolidation de la paix dans les départements de Diffa (Communes de Diffa, Chetimari et Gueskerou), Bosso (Commune de Bosso et Toumour) et N'Guigmi (Communes de Kablewa et Nguigmi)	IOM, Search for Common Ground

Key information	Year Approved	Name	Implementing partners*
Niger-Mali-Burkina Faso <a href="#">PBF/BFA/B-6</a> <a href="#">PBF/NER/B-6</a> <a href="#">PBF/MLI/B-1</a> \$2,500,000 2022–2024	2021	AILP: Appui aux Initiatives Locales de promotion de la Paix	Mercy Corps
Somalia <a href="#">PBF/IRF-433</a> (YPI) \$1,500,000 2021–2023 [also in cohort 3]	2021	Promoting Inclusive Action in Peacebuilding (PIAP Initiative)	FAO, IOM

\*For reasons of space, acronyms for all UN entities are not spelled out in this table, but are listed in the [Thematic Review](#).

The 12 projects selected for this cohort represent a wide range of types of programming and partnerships, as well as of climate, peace and security contexts. The largest portion are in West Africa, and particularly the Sahel. This is where the greatest share of existing PBF-supported programming related to CPS is implemented,<sup>6</sup> and it is also a central area of activity for climate-related programming outside of the PBF. However, there has also been substantial engagement in CPS work in the Horn of Africa, represented in this cohort sample by a project implemented in Somalia ([PBF/IRF-433](#)). Two projects in Central Africa and in Latin America offer additional geographical perspectives (CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#); Honduras [PBF/IRF-435](#)).

The type of environmental or, in some cases, climate-related issues at the centre of each project varied. Most of the projects in the Sahel and Central Africa – including the projects CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#); Chad [PBF/TCD/A-1](#); Burkina Faso [PBF/IRF-446](#); Niger [PBF/IRF-462](#); Mali [PBF/MLI/C-1](#); Mauritania [PBF/IRF-441](#); and Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso [PBF/BFA/B-6](#) – responded to land management and natural resource stressors connected to water shortages and more severe weather events that have wracked the region and created significant follow-on effects in terms of displacement and intercommunal conflict. Many of these projects focused on how climatic changes have affected traditional transhumance patterns<sup>7</sup> and contributed to increasing conflict and tensions between farmers and herders. Other projects focused on more locally specific environmental stressors, for example, forest preservation and sustainable livelihoods in Côte d’Ivoire ([PBF/IRF-259](#)); environmental degradation connected to local artisanal mining in Côte d’Ivoire ([PBF/CIV/A-5](#)) and Mali ([PBF/MLI/C-1](#)); and local water management and water conflict

(linked to canal renovation and management) in Somalia ([PBF/IRF-433](#)).

There was also variation in the ways that the environmental stressors interacted with peace and security issues. One interlocuter who had worked with PBF-supported projects in Central and Latin American countries observed that they do not see climate change “driving conflict in the same way as in Africa”; instead, in the region in question, the “negative externalities of private sector projects” was a more significant source of community tensions and follow-on effects.<sup>8</sup>

The focus of the 2025 Thematic Review research was on the participation pillar of YPS, and this was illustrated in this cohort through multiple projects’ efforts to include youth in conversations about natural resources management or other environment-related peacebuilding. In addition, because of the natural linkages between natural resources issues and livelihoods, there was a strong emphasis on youth vulnerability and youth economic issues. Nearly all the projects in this cohort had central socioeconomic components (e.g. livelihood creation or support, seed funding, job training and capacity-building).<sup>9</sup> An additional notable theme in this cohort was migration and displacement. Reflecting the strong links between climate and environmental stressors and migration, eight of the nine projects in the 2025 Thematic Review sample with a strong link to displacement and migration issues were included in this cohort.

Two key themes were prominent across all the projects. Examples of each are listed below, with more project themes and details discussed in the findings section.

### Youth empowerment via land and natural resources management:

Most of the PBF-supported programming that brings together youth empowerment and climate-related or environmental peacebuilding focuses on including young people in land and natural resources management, or in helping mitigate or prevent conflicts surrounding land and natural resources. To some degree all the projects in this cohort did this, as did several examined in other cohorts.<sup>10</sup> In some projects, the core strategy was to encourage youth inclusion in local decision-making and dispute resolution bodies connected to land or natural resources management. At a local community level, decision-making and dispute resolution over natural resources are a critical arena of both political and economic participation, and one that youth are often excluded from. This exclusion can be a contributor to conflict, as a source of grievance or contributor to vulnerability. It also represents missed opportunities for young people to contribute to both conflict prevention and natural resources management. Some of the project strategies illustrating this include:

- Côte d'Ivoire [PBF/CIV/A-5](#): bringing youth (those linked to pre-existing youth council representatives) into community discussions and planning about environmental degradation, particularly those connected to environmental stressors surrounding artisanal mining.
- Somalia [PBF/IRF-433](#): promoting youth participation in local governance and decision-making mechanisms by linking youth with clan elders, and supporting youth initiatives that would benefit community environmental maintenance.
- Honduras [PBF/IRF-435](#): supporting the expansion of civic space around land management and land conflict, with a particular focus on Indigenous lands, so that both youth and other civil society groups can take part in more inclusive land management.
- Mali [PBF/MLI/C-1](#): working to expand youth's political participation and participation in natural resources management through nurturing social clubs known as "Club Dimitra", which provide youth with dedicated spaces to contribute to local governance and conflict resolution. Within these clubs, youth discuss issues in their community (whether related to a source of tension, or a natural resources issue), and then bring their solutions or proposals to "general assemblies" or councils at the village level.
- Burkina Faso [PBF/IRF-446](#): improving youth knowledge and capacity about land and natural resources management (including its connection to climate stressors) as a way to improve their capacity to take part in decision-making in the long term.

**Addressing youth needs and livelihood concerns:** Given the centrality of land and natural resources to livelihood issues, addressing competition for limited resources and encouraging youth engagement was seen as a way to both address youth vulnerabilities (which, if unmet, could be a conflict driver) and improve social cohesion. Improving youth livelihoods was also often complementary to improving public goods and addressing grievances for the community as a whole. The focus of many of these projects was on improving the capacity and position of youth so that they could pursue sustainable livelihoods more effectively. Examples of these strategies within the projects in this cohort included:

- CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#): supporting vulnerable parts of the population – specifically women, girls and youth – by teaching them sustainable agricultural practices, securing land rights and facilitating community dialogue. The rationale was to strengthen their resilience and improve overall social cohesion.
- Côte d'Ivoire [PBF/IRF-259](#): addressing community tensions around relocation from protected forests and strengthening social cohesion by channelling the displaced (who were primarily youth) into environmentally friendly alternative livelihoods (i.e. agroforestry, forest preservation and management), as well as engaging young people in community-based mechanisms for forest preservation.
- Mauritania [PBF/IRF-441](#): relieving community tensions (particularly between host and migrant communities) by supporting alternative livelihoods and addressing resource constraints (i.e. strains on local water resources and schools), with a particular focus on involving young people from migrant and host communities in alternative energy (biogas) distribution and peacebuilding.
- Mali [PBF/MLI/C-1](#): supporting young people's financial independence and means – through private sector connections, financial management and literacy training, and support for youth entrepreneurship<sup>11</sup> – as a way to address youth vulnerability and risk of recruitment into artisanal gold mining, which contributes to environmental degradation and community tensions.<sup>12</sup>
- Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso [PBF/BFA/B-6](#): enabling community-based actors in the remote Liptako-Gourma subregion to advance their own initiatives for enhancing social cohesion and peace, with priority given to youth-led initiatives and those related to climate and natural resources.

Many of these projects had activities in both of these categories. For example, in the project [PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad there was an equal focus on involving young men and

women in conflict prevention and management mechanisms and contributing to stronger social cohesion and reduced risk by supporting access to livelihoods.<sup>13</sup> As noted above, the project [PBF/MLI/C-1](#) in Mali also had an equal focus on bringing youth and women into natural resources management, and on stimulating economic opportunities to improve social cohesion and reduce conflict triggers.

In addition, some of the projects adopted community strategies related to land and natural resources management and alternative livelihoods in ways that aligned with the broader climate adaptation agenda. A number also identified ways in which combining considerations for youth vulnerability and economic and community strains due to climate change and natural resources scarcity could be part of a strategy for the prevention of violent extremism and a more structural or long-term approach to risks of criminality and recruitment by armed groups. These and other rationales and programming responses are explored further in the findings section below.

## Key findings

Peacebuilding programming at the intersection of CPS and YPS is still very much a nascent area. As part of the initial project selection, the research team reviewed 153 PBF-supported projects from the last 5 years, including those considered in the [2023 Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review](#) as well as a much larger number of projects identified as connected to youth programming. Very few appeared to have an intentional focus on both youth, and on natural resources, environment or climate-related themes.

It is even more challenging to find strong examples of youth inclusion within programming specifically focused on climate and peacebuilding. Within the 153 projects examined, only one had a very concerted focus on climate and peacebuilding and also gave specific consideration to the role of young people in this area, the project [PBF/GMB/B-2](#) in The Gambia. Other projects had a nexus with climate change – for example, noting the impact of climate change in the context provided, or even in the title of the project – but this was not the major focus of the theory of change or activities.<sup>14</sup> There have been a much greater number of PBF-supported projects involving natural resources issues or other forms of environmental peacebuilding (not specifically climate-related but often with linkages). Even with these projects, however, young people were often one of many groups addressed, rather than the specific focus.

Nor is this issue of limited existing programming on youth and climate confined to the work supported by the PBF. Interviews with a broad range of experts working in the climate and environmental programming space confirmed that there is a relatively low level of programming at the intersection of YPS and CPS across the peacebuilding space. For example, while there have been dedicated efforts to pilot programming that would respond to the gendered impact of climate change and involve women in climate adaptation and response, there has not been the same level of activity when it comes to involving youth in climate adaptation and response, or considering the specific impact of climate change on young people.<sup>15</sup>

While this research identified an overall gap in terms of CPS and YPS programming, the project findings also suggest tremendous potential in peacebuilding programming at the intersection of youth, climate and natural resources. Four interlocking findings stood out from the research:

1. Work at the intersection of YPS and CPS has been emerging organically, often due to youth agency and leadership on climate.
2. The projects evidence the role of youth-inclusive peacebuilding in facilitating sustainable climate adaptation.
3. Natural resources and climate-related peacebuilding offer the promise of getting at “root causes”, including sources of youth vulnerability and conflict drivers.
4. Environmental and climate-related projects can offer opportunities for positive peacebuilding and entry points for other peacebuilding goals, including youth inclusion.

### Bottom-up emergence of climate and youth work

**Finding 1: Work at the intersection of YPS and CPS has been emerging organically, often due to youth agency and leadership on climate.**

Although it was hard to find peacebuilding projects that brought together YPS and CPS themes by design, young people emerged as central stakeholders in a number of climate and environment-related projects examined, both within and beyond the Review sample. Several of the projects identified for this cohort were not initially youth-focused projects. They related to CPS or environmental peacebuilding but were designed to address these issues generally, without a specific focus on the impact or role of young people. However, in the course of implementation, it quickly became apparent that young people were key stakeholders and they became a central part of project activities.<sup>16</sup> In projects like CAR [PBF/IRF-468](#), Chad [PBF/](#)



[TCD/A-1](#) and Burkina Faso [PBF/IRF-446](#), youth formed a large percentage of the young herders whose livelihoods were affected by diminishing water points, forcing them into new transhumance points that brought them into conflict with farming populations.<sup>17</sup> They were the primary actors in artisanal mining, which was the centre of environmental peacebuilding work in Côte d'Ivoire ([PBF/CIV/A-5](#)) and Mali ([PBF/MLI/C-1](#)). In projects in the Lake Chad Basin ([PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad) and on the border of Mauritania and Mali ([PBF/IRF-441](#) in Mauritania), young people made up a large portion of the internally displaced persons, such that easing tensions around natural resources strains and stressors, and developing more sustainable livelihoods, would inevitably have to involve the youth population. For example, in the project in Chad, although it was not initially designed as a “youth” project, young people ultimately made up 60 per cent of the participants.<sup>18</sup>

One climate adviser working in the Liptako-Gourma subregion of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso – which he described as a paradigmatic case of climate and security issues coming together – stressed that youth and youth organizations had a critical role to play in CPS initiatives. Noting that youth made up 60 to 70 per cent of the population in that area, he said, “There is no activity, no strategy developed in this region, without youth in the centre of it.”<sup>19</sup>

One finding from the 2025 Thematic Review was that youth inclusion can bring benefits to peacebuilding by virtue of bringing different perspectives and vantage points to the discussion. This appeared particularly true in the climate space. In several of the projects, it was young people in the targeted communities who raised the issue of climate change as a factor, or appeared more ready to embrace new approaches, technologies or adaptation methods that would be more climate-friendly and sustainable. For example, in one of the projects in Côte d'Ivoire ([PBF/CIV/A-5](#)), which focused on environmental degradation and community tensions surrounding artisanal mining, youth representatives were the ones to raise the issue of climate change and its impacts in the community dialogues organized.<sup>20</sup> “Youth had a level of sophistication and awareness of the environmental impact of climate change that was surprising,” an implementing partner who was present observed.<sup>21</sup> While elders tended to attribute natural resources issues – such as declining crop yields, lack of pastureland for animals, declining arable land, and conflicts and tensions connected to them – to factors ranging from youth turning their backs on agriculture to “the will of the gods”, youth would point to climate change linked to the burning of fossil fuels.<sup>22</sup>

In another project that worked with host and migrant communities in the Lake Chad Basin ([PBF/TCD/A-1](#)), an implementing partner recollected, “We had not planned the issue of climate in the activities, but the young people themselves put it on the table when we consulted them.”<sup>23</sup> He said it was youth who proposed a significant reforestation initiative in their area (which became part of the project activities) and also took the greatest interest in the other sustainable adaptation strategies introduced.

The important, de facto leadership role that youth are playing in emerging CPS initiatives was also observed by those working on initiatives beyond PBF-supported programming, for example in climate security work led by regional organizations and UN missions in West Africa, or in larger continental initiatives led by the African Union.<sup>24</sup> One African Union representative explained the many youth-led initiatives happening as part of the African Union’s Great Green Wall initiative as follows: “Youth have a sense of how climate is affecting them and affecting their continent. They know that they are the ones that will be affected in the long term by this changing climate. They want to be a part of the response to violence driven by this.”<sup>25</sup>

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**“Youth have a sense of how climate is affecting them ... they are the ones that will be affected in the long term by this changing climate. They want to be a part of the response to violence driven by this.” – African Union staff member on youth**

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The fact that young people were emerging as central players in CPS work and were helping to advance climate perspectives and adaptation in natural resources-related projects points to the significant natural synergies between YPS and CPS work. However, it is also important to highlight the gap that this signifies. Because youth were often not thought of as the primary or significant target of CPS and environmentally attuned peacebuilding, they were often not the key drivers or consulted interlocutors during the project development phase. Some community consultations involved young people, but to a lesser degree than some of the explicitly youth participation-focused projects in the 2025 Thematic Review sample.<sup>26</sup> Youth climate activists interviewed said a larger issue in the field is the lack of funding for youth-led climate work, and lack of support for young climate activists to develop initiatives.

## Youth-led peacebuilding facilitating climate adaptation

### Finding 2: The projects evidence the role of peacebuilding in facilitating sustainable climate adaptation.

The project that most explicitly tested climate adaptation in peacebuilding was [PBF/GMB/B-2](#) in The Gambia, with overt goals to jointly reduce the impact of climate change and social conflict by bringing communities together in adaptation practices, and making them aware of the peace and security implications of climate change. Twelve communities identified as experiencing tensions around land and natural resources (with climate change identified as a strong contributor) were brought together through community activities, dialogue and livelihood support. Most of the activities had a dual focus or aim linked to both social cohesion and conflict prevention and addressing environmental and climate-related root causes.<sup>27</sup> For example, the focus of many of the activities related in some way to addressing natural resources scarcity or degradation, and/or the effects of climate change.

Activities included livelihood training on alternative (environmentally friendly) livelihoods or on sustainable agriculture, as well as community discussions on climate adaptation (as related to livelihood transition and land management) and community activities related to reforestation and community clean-up. Additionally, these activities were designed to foster community exchange and trust-building across groups that had previously been caught up in inter-communal tensions or conflicts. The skills trainings on alternative livelihoods, for example, were hosted by different communities, but with those from other communities included. The clean-up and reforestation initiatives tended to be designed as joint activities that integrated those from different communities or from different parts of communities (i.e. youth and older groups). Through these general trust-building exercises, space was created for breakthroughs on community conflicts, such as a long-standing dispute between two communities over a tract of land, and another related to shared forest use.

The project was described by those involved as a “transformative initiative”, one that kickstarted community discussions on adaptation and alternative livelihoods, but also appeared to have a real impact in terms of reducing community tensions and improving social cohesion in communities experiencing the impact of climate change.<sup>28</sup> It also appeared to catalyse government and community awareness and cooperation that would be necessary for continuing proactive adaptation responses.<sup>29</sup> Overall, the evaluation found strong evidence that the project had

strengthened community relationships and social cohesion, creating a “societal-level change” that suggested it should be replicated in other communities.<sup>30</sup>

The project was not solely focused on youth, but inclusion of young people became an important part of both the climate adaptation and peacebuilding elements. One of the implementing partners observed that “youth are a very strong entry point for taking forward climate adaptation... [for example, in] tree-planting, looking into forest belts, preventing fires – youth are at the forefront in addressing these issues.”<sup>31</sup> However, what was equally critical, he observed, was that over the course of the project youth became “ambassadors who could talk to other members of the communities”, helping address some of the sources of violence and tensions.<sup>32</sup> Community members interviewed also highlighted the willingness of youth to cooperate in the project as a significant turning point. As one reflected: “If peace exists here it is because of the youth. The youth are involved in violence, and it is the youth that decided on peace.”<sup>33</sup> Overall, the project experience offered an important proof of concept on ways to bring peacebuilding and climate adaptation together, and the particular role that youth can play in that. The independent evaluation as well as project partners, UN officials and government officials interviewed all argued that it should be replicated.

Some of the most interesting learning about the role of peacebuilding in climate adaptation came from a project that was not, ostensibly, about it. The project [PBF/IRF-259](#) in Côte d'Ivoire was not initially designed as a climate adaptation project. The core dilemma underlying the project and the issues it sought to address will confront many governments and communities should they carry forward global commitments to environmental protection and local climate adaptation. The project was a response to a classic example of maladaptation: with increasing competition for arable land in Côte d'Ivoire, parts of the population have been settling in forested areas and contributing to deforestation. To counter this, in 2016 the Côte d'Ivoire Government introduced a plan to relocate communities that were (illegally) occupying protected forests. While a forward step in terms of biodiversity protection, this relocation created tensions, both among the displaced populations and in the host communities they were settled into.<sup>34</sup> The project sought to address these tensions through a mixed model of community awareness-raising, and efforts to promote community cooperation and social cohesion by involving them in forest protection and sustainable jobs. Youth in particular, as the largest proportion of those occupying the forests, were given roles in dispute resolution committees and early warning mechanisms, so they could



act as sentinels to protect the forests. The independent evaluation concluded that the project had “significantly impacted the environment, behaviour and habits of community populations” with the activities not only facilitating the governmental plan for environmental protection but also creating “real opportunities for cohabitation and living together among communities”.<sup>35</sup>

This example offers a global lesson about what peacebuilding strategies have to offer in this space. In many communities the very process of climate adaptation, while necessary in the long term, can exacerbate tensions or generate conflict. For climate adaptation to be successful and sustainable, it will require greater conflict-sensitivity combined with peacebuilding techniques. Within this, the projects suggest a particularly valuable role for youth inclusion as a necessary element to conflict-sensitive climate adaptation. In both The Gambia and the Côte d’Ivoire projects, specific attention was paid to involving young people in community discussions and dispute resolution over natural resources issues, and in enabling them to develop more sustainable livelihoods. As noted in the previous finding, it was young people in the Côte d’Ivoire dialogues who raised the idea of climate change as a major factor and something that communities needed to respond to. Given these experiences, in this and other projects, there was a recognition that youth can either be leaders in championing a more harmonious adaptation process or be spoilers if not appropriately included.

### **Tackling root causes of youth vulnerability and conflict**

**Finding 3: Natural resources and climate-related peacebuilding offer the promise of getting at “root causes”, including sources of youth vulnerability and conflict drivers.**

In most of the local peacebuilding contexts examined, natural resources constraints and changing weather patterns were viewed as root causes of local conflict. In some projects this involved conflicts between farmers and herders over grazing lands and water points (i.e. CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#); Chad [PBF/TCD/A-1](#); Burkina Faso [PBF/IRF-446](#)); in others it was inter-communal tensions between communities competing for increasingly limited resources (i.e. The Gambia [PBF/GMB/B-2](#); Mauritania [PBF/IRF-441](#)). From a human security perspective, the increasing scarcity of water, more severe weather events (from droughts to flooding), salination of water sources and agricultural lands, and other sources of environmental degradation severely affected food security and livelihoods, in particular for those with limited coping means and opportunities

(frequently, young people). Several of the projects also recognized that increasing natural resources scarcity (e.g. depleted water and arable lands) contributed to inter-communal conflicts and led many of those vulnerable to these impacts (including youth) to join criminal networks or other violent extremist groups as the only available source of income. This linkage between natural resources and economic vulnerability as root causes or drivers of violence, conflict and extremism figured as part of the project background and rationale in several projects in this cohort: CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#); Honduras [PBF/IRF-435](#); Chad [PBF/TCD/A-1](#); Mauritania [PBF/IRF-441](#); Mali [PBF/MLI/C-1](#); Niger [PBF/IRF-462](#).<sup>36</sup>

Project responses to these challenges often combined “hard” inputs such as more effective or sustainable agriculture techniques, renovating water points or pastureland, improving animal fodder or care and providing seeds, with “soft” inputs such as mediating tensions, or encouraging dialogue or social cohesion (e.g. Chad [PBF/TCD/A-1](#); Mauritania [PBF/IRF-441](#); Somalia [PBF/IRF-433](#)).<sup>37</sup> This combination of material inputs with peacebuilding strategies tended to be welcomed by communities (including the young people within them) because these project inputs offered direct responses to what were seen as the root causes and key issues in their communities. The evaluation of the project [PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad (which combined a focus on community dispute resolution and dialogue with inputs such as replenishing water sources and training to over 2,000 people in sustainable agriculture) found that the activities allowed “74.9% of beneficiaries to meet their food requirements, 59% to cover health needs, 43.31% to meet clothing needs, and 39.12% to guarantee educational needs”.<sup>38</sup> The majority of women and youth beneficiaries (91.3 per cent) recognized that their conditions had improved thanks to the project activities, and the evaluation therefore concluded that the project had demonstrably met significant community needs and that this had “contributed significantly to the stabilization of conflicts”.<sup>39</sup>

Youth in particular strongly welcomed this type of programming. Socioeconomic needs and lack of job opportunities are often at the core of youth concerns and grievances; in most of the communities where peacebuilding work is happening it is hard to address these economic barriers without engaging with the land and natural resources issues. Given this, most of the projects in this cohort responded to youth socioeconomic and livelihood concerns in some way, often through a focus on sustainable livelihood development for young people, but also through improving young people’s ability to engage on land and natural resource issues. For example, the project [PBF/IRF-](#)

[462](#) in Niger provided both types of support: it provided economic support to facilitate the reintegration of those formerly linked to violent extremism (which was a central concern in the project and the region), and it also sought to increase overall youth awareness and engagement on environmental protection and natural resources management. This included supporting forums for youth discussion, with greater information about environmental codes and best practices (i.e. not contributing to deforestation or other forms of environmental degradation) and providing a space for youth to debate and propose solutions so that they are better positioned to take environmental protection forward.

Because environmental degradation, climate change and scarcity of natural resources can be strongly linked to drivers of conflict, the projects in this cohort frequently framed environmental or climate-related interventions as ways to tackle root causes and identify more structural strategies for conflict prevention. In the project [PBF/IRF-304](#) in CAR, the rationale for involving youth in the project (both young women and young men) was that “[y]outh is vulnerable to indoctrination and can therefore be drawn into insecurity”.<sup>40</sup> Yet the key strategy for responding to this lay in addressing root causes and increasing community resilience, by adapting to environmental changes and also improving inclusion. The project sought to respond to increasing natural resources constraints and low crop yields by supporting more sustainable agricultural practices, involving vulnerable members of the community (notably women and girls), and also by improving community management of these resources and the tensions involved (e.g. through attention to land rights and inclusive community dialogues).

This linkage between addressing environment-related root causes of conflict and conflict prevention was also central in other projects in this cohort. For example, several projects operated on the assumption that a more inclusive and environmentally attuned system of land and natural resources management – notably including the youth population – would result in better natural resources management, and thus prevention of these conflicts in the future (Burkina Faso [PBF/IRF-446](#); The Gambia [PBF/GMB/B-2](#); CAR [PBF/IRF-304](#); Honduras [PBF/IRF-435](#)). Others framed the (often youth-centred) intervention as part of conflict prevention. For example, several projects involved youth in dispute resolution in relation to land conflict or natural resources preservation (Chad [PBF/TCD/A-1](#); Solomon Islands [PBF/IRF-472](#)) as a way to both help resolve conflicts and provide a form of early warning (via the youth involved) should there be a risk of these

conflicts breaking out again. The project [PBF/IRF-259](#) in Côte d’Ivoire went one step further and organized youth as early warning sentinels to help in forest preservation (the key resource at the centre of communal conflicts in the project) and to ward off other criminal activity.

## Entry points for youth inclusion

### **Finding 4: Environmental and climate-related projects can offer opportunities for positive peacebuilding and entry points for other peacebuilding goals, including youth inclusion.**

A key finding of the 2023 *Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review* was that because these natural resource-related projects are so valuable to communities, they can sometimes create entry points for addressing other peacebuilding goals, such as inclusion for marginalized groups.<sup>41</sup> The projects in cohort 4 illustrated this in a range of ways. The project [PBF/IRF-304](#) in CAR was focused on land management to address transhumance tensions but aimed to use engagement on these issues – which were critical to the community – to also promote gender equality. Using the entry point of land and agricultural issues, the project was able to facilitate agreements by village leaders to allow women and girls access to agricultural land.<sup>42</sup> The project [PBF/IRF-435](#) in Honduras afforded opportunities to bring youth, particularly those from Indigenous communities, into a discussion about land conflict management, thereby also helping address other structural inequities and drivers of conflict. In The Gambia, one of the implementing partners said they could use climate-related and livelihood activities to open up space for inclusion of those who are “always left behind” – young people and women – and also to introduce more sensitive issues, such as discussions of sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>43</sup> The project allowed them to push against existing cultural barriers and norms, and open up the space for addressing underlying cultural drivers of violence and conflict.

The project [PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad offers a strong example of how environment- or climate-related projects create a natural entry point for youth inclusion, as well as the benefits that can result from including young people in these conversations. The project was situated in a context of increasing resource strains and tensions among different communities in the Lake Chad Basin – a mix of local Chadians, Chadians displaced from other parts of the country, returnees who had been displaced in earlier periods, and also Nigerien and Nigerian refugees. An additional faultline identified at the start of the project was a great deal of intergenerational mistrust – young people harbouring negative perceptions of formal and informal

mechanisms and institutions (and the elders in charge of them), and elders' suspicion of young people because of fears that they would contribute to extremist groups like Boko Haram.

Some of the “hard” inputs (replenishing water sources, training in sustainable agriculture, etc.) made the project highly valued and attractive to communities because it helped meet core food security and livelihood needs. Engaging work on these issues through approaches that engendered cross- and intra-community collaboration created opportunities for breaking down some of the mistrust both intergenerationally and between communities. This included, for example, mixing young people with elders in dispute resolution activities, and organizing mixed groups of refugees, internally displaced persons and others from host communities in some of the reforestation and other sustainable livelihood activities. The evaluation concluded that the combined approach had “induced a notable change in social relations between the beneficiary communities” and facilitated “the rapprochement between different communities towards social cohesion”.<sup>44</sup> Implementing partners noted that the positive effects of bringing young people into dispute resolution and the self-confidence that they gained through that engagement helped counter intergenerational mistrust.

Another strong example of entry points for youth inclusion was provided by the introduction of youth as change agents in efforts to address water shortages and conflicts in competing communities in Somalia ([PBF/IRF-433](#)). The underlying conflict analysis noted that scarce resources and poor water management were continuing drivers of inter-clan conflict. It was difficult to get to these root causes of conflict by working with elders alone given calcified prejudices and strong sociocultural barriers to working across clan lines. However, in the initial project surveys and consultations, youth were identified as having a particular “vantage point”, with greater fluidity and capacity to facilitate cross-clan interaction.<sup>45</sup> The project recognized continuing stigmas against youth, particularly given the propensity in Somalia for youth to be caught up in violence and thus be characterized as “trouble-makers” or “agents of chaos” rather than peacemakers.<sup>46</sup> However, the opportunity to collectively address a fundamental challenge for the communities in question – water scarcity – was viewed as offering a powerful entry point that could allow young people to instead play the role of “change-makers”.<sup>47</sup>

Youth associations were supported to work across clan lines to manage and restore water canals – for example, by engaging with the district peace and safety committee

(local authorities in charge of water management) and by discussing the projects with communities to prevent tensions or disputes.<sup>48</sup> In addition, the project used the incentive of youth-led community rehabilitation projects (i.e. rehabilitation of water canals) to foster further collaboration and cross-clan engagement and interaction. Mixed teams of youth – mixed across clan and village lines – competed to lead these community water projects, with winners to be identified through public voting via an app developed by the project. In addition to making pitches through the app, the participants were required to pitch their projects to villagers in-person. This game strategy generated significant interest, with one community reporting the participation of 19,000 people in the first 10 days of the launch of the app.<sup>49</sup> Implementing partners and other UN staff who were interviewed viewed the project as highly successful in positioning young people to cross clan lines and collectively solve problems, both material (water-related) and interpersonal or intercommunal in nature. The project also illustrates another key finding of the 2023 Thematic Review: natural resource or climate-related work can create the space for trust-building and cooperation, a space for positive peacebuilding. However, importantly in this case, it was youth who were helping create and lead the positive peacebuilding in action.

Giving youth this entry point thus allowed them to make positive contributions to the communities, which could have important knock-on effects in terms of improving community relations and social cohesion (both vis-à-vis intergenerational divides and other sources of tension). The project [PBF/IRF-441](#) in Mauritania was designed to prevent potential tensions between host and refugee communities by addressing shared natural resources issues, encouraging collaboration on reforestation, and supporting women's cooperatives (working on activities like agroforestry) and “green jobs” projects. Youth were a key focal point, with young people from both refugee and host populations helping develop and deliver biogas, and also acting as peace messengers by addressing tensions between communities, resolving disputes and engaging community members in sustainable practices. Their contributions proved to be so valuable that the elders of the community later invited some of these young people to take part in village committees.<sup>50</sup>

A similar phenomenon emerged in the project in the cross-border region of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso ([PBF/BFA/B-6](#)). Youth organizations were provided subgrants to develop community initiatives, many with a linkage to climate security and environmental peacebuilding. In some of the communities, youth established local councils to raise awareness on these issues, in addition to spearheading

local community clean-up or environmentally sustainable initiatives. As a result of the positive impression created by their engagement and leadership, some of these young people were invited to take part in community development planning. Youth efforts also inspired others in the community to do more, for example by sparking local businesses to contribute to community infrastructure, or encouraging local governments to reduce taxes on certain communal structures in ways that would improve their usage.<sup>51</sup>

Another example was provided by a youth activist in Yemen (unrelated to any of the PBF-supported projects examined in this sample). He shared that youth-led efforts to install solar panels in conflict-affected areas in Yemen gave the organization in question greater credibility with elders: “We, as young people, are always the ones to address service gaps.”<sup>52</sup> Their efforts focused on providing a sustainable solution for nighttime lighting, which had been disrupted by the conflict, leading to increased crime and insecurity. Despite the challenges of sourcing solar panels from abroad, they successfully lit up their neighbourhoods. Importantly, they collaborated with local authorities to prevent theft of the solar panels, involving the government in the planning and security of the installations, which further strengthened their credibility and partnership with both local elders and officials.<sup>53</sup> These examples illustrate the point raised in the 2025 Thematic Review that one of the most effective ways for countering stigma against youth is to enable them to prove themselves. Although not the only approach, projects around climate and natural resources have proved to be a tangible way for youth to do so in multiple contexts.

## Conclusion

An examination of these projects suggests that CPS and environmental peacebuilding strategies can be an important space for youth engagement and participation, but also that youth inclusion and participation can significantly enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of this work. Young people have already proven themselves as leaders in advancing ideas about climate adaptation both globally and in their local communities. In addition, the findings suggest that a youth-inclusive peacebuilding approach is more likely to conflict-proof local climate adaptation initiatives, which will need to happen in more communities for global commitments to be met.

Despite the clear dividends, the research identified a gap at the intersection of CPS and YPS. These projects indicate that this is one of the most fertile potential areas for youth

programming, because of the natural interest and leadership of youth in climate and environmental issues; the key nexus with socioeconomic gaps and issues; and the potential for natural resources-related programming to open entry points for other peacebuilding goals. Yet there is still a relatively small amount of programming specific to youth and natural resources management, and an even smaller amount of programming that considers climate or climate adaptation work from a youth perspective. While this work has been emerging organically, the exclusion of a strong youth perspective at the stage of project design and conception can mean that youth voices are often missing in developing this core area of work. Youth organizations and activists working in this space frequently observed a lack of sufficient funding to allow them to take their own initiatives forward. Last, where this work does advance, because it is still a new area, it is important to invest more in programming approaches that incorporate learning components.

Given this, the following key recommendations are proposed, both for future PBF-supported work and that of other donors and programming partners:

- **Invest in greater research, assessment and policy attention in the CPS x YPS space.** Within the CPS field, more attention needs to be given specifically to the youth dimensions and impact of climate change, similar to the progress made in considering the gendered impacts of climate change, which in turn helped build the theoretical framework that has allowed for greater programming at the intersection of YPS and CPS.
- **Pilot youth-centred CPS programming in more areas.** There is room for more investments in pilot programming specifically focusing on young people’s role in CPS-related peacebuilding, in particular how youth might be part of community-level climate adaptation work.
- **Invest in greater monitoring, evaluation and learning, and more longitudinal studies of youth-centred CPS work.** There were significantly fewer independent evaluations available of the PBF-supported projects that worked with youth and natural resources or youth and climate change-related areas. Even these evaluations lacked, by and large, any means of appraising the impact for climate dimensions and qualitative evaluations of the impact on youth empowerment and participation.
- **Consider more systemic engagement on the socioeconomic dimensions of natural resources programming.** For those involved in programming focused on engaging youth in alternative or sustainable livelihoods, consider ways to link these to national or private sector programming initiatives, or to broader climate financing initiatives and development strategies.

- **Consider more regional partnerships on youth and climate work, particularly in Africa.** While the peacebuilding field appears to be lagging slightly in exploring links between CPS and YPS, some States and regional organizations have been leading the way in calling for greater attention to this nexus, in particular the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa and the subregional Liptako-Gourma Authority. UN regional offices have also increasingly developed resources and capacities to

support regional work, including the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, the Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. Developing youth-centred CPS programming in coordination with some of these regional organizations or missions may be an important avenue for expanding this work, and also for expanding cross-border or regional peacebuilding models going forward.

# Endnotes

- 1 Research interviews and material were developed by the entire research team supporting the 2025 Peacebuilding Fund *Thematic Review on Youth, Peace and Security*. Erica Gaston led the analysis and drafting for this cohort, with additional support from Luisa Kern, Imane Karimou, Marie Röpsch, Dalia Atallah and Emma Bapt.
- 2 See, e.g., United Nations Security Council resolution 2419 (2018); the Presidential Statement on Youth, Peace and Security ([S/PRST/2019/15](#)) adopted in December 2019; Security Council resolution [2535](#) (2020); the UN Secretary-General's inaugural report on YPS, [S/2020/167](#); the United Nations General Assembly resolution [A/RES/76/137](#) (2021). There were also references to the importance of youth in conflict prevention, and of youth inclusion in peacebuilding in the twin "sustaining peace" resolutions of 2016, [S/RES/2282](#) (2016) and [A/RES/70/262](#) (2016).
- 3 The YPI call for proposals (as well as the related Gender Promotion Initiative) did not take place in 2024. At the time of writing, there were no immediate plans to reinstate these calls. Interview with Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) staff, Microsoft Teams, 6 December 2024 (Interview #180).
- 4 See, e.g., United Nations Development Programme, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Folke Bernadotte Academy, *Beyond Vulnerability: A Guidance Note on Youth, Climate, Peace and Security* (New York, UNDP, 2024); UNDP, *Bridging Generations: Pathways to a Youth-Inclusive Climate, Peace and Security Agenda* (New York, UNDP, 2024); Kofi Annan Foundation, *Resilience Rising: Youth Research Informing Global Climate and Conflict Responses* (Geneva, Kofi Annan Foundation, 2024).
- 5 Erica Gaston and others, *Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review* (New York, United Nations University, 2023).
- 6 Ibid, pp. 13–15.
- 7 Transhumance refers to a seasonal pattern of migration of herders with their livestock to pasturelands in other geographical or climatic regions. For further discussion of how traditional patterns have been affected by climate change, and the linkage with other conflict dynamics, see Eoin F. McGuirk and Nathan Nunn, "Transhumant pastoralism, climate change, and conflict in Africa", *The Review of Economic Studies*, vol. 92, Issue 1 (January 2025). Available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdae027>.
- 8 Interview with two UN staff members, Microsoft Teams, 21 May 2024 (Interview #141).
- 9 The project [PBF/MLI/C-1](#) in Mali proposes to support 1,500 young women and young men, including return migrants, in developing self-employment resilience to climate change in the agro-pastoral sector. The project [PBF/IRF-446](#) in Burkina Faso directly positions the engagement of youth in land and local territorial planning and decision-making with investments in their socioeconomic stability (and peace for the community). The project [PBF/IRF-441](#) in Mauritania and the project [PBF/GMB/B-2 in](#) The Gambia both place youth access to livelihoods at the centre of social and environmental sustainability. The project [PBF/IRF-304](#) in CAR and the project [PBF/IRF-435](#) in Honduras focus interventions on the economic vulnerability of particular groups, in particular young women in the former, and youth from Indigenous communities in the latter.
- 10 See, e.g., Cameroon-Chad-Gabon [PBF/IRF-370](#), [369](#), [368](#), Liberia [PBF/LBR/D-15](#) and Solomon Islands [PBF/IRF-472](#).
- 11 The entrepreneurship support included enabling loans through the village loan associations, networking with potential buyers and suppliers for their goods, and mentoring by members of the private sector.
- 12 Traditional or artisanal gold mining often relies on the use of chemicals, which create run-off and degrade agricultural land. In addition, the way that water is used in some artisanal gold mining can contribute to the drying up, and pollution of, rivers. In some areas, artisanal gold mining has contributed to deforestation. Interview with PBF Secretariat staff, Microsoft Teams, 8 April 2024 (Interview #74); Interview with implementing partner, Microsoft Teams, 1 May 2024 (Interview #143).
- 13 Livelihood activities included providing training in accounting and finance management; initiatives related to fisheries and livestock; savings and other financial services for women and vulnerable individuals; and supporting environmentally friendly practices and livelihoods such as collection and use of animal dung, manufacture of improved fireplaces and community reforestation.
- 14 This is largely in keeping with the findings of the 2023 *Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review*, which found only a minority of PBF-supported projects had a strong nexus with climate adaptation or mitigation, as opposed to a broader focus on natural resources and environmental peacebuilding.
- 15 Interview with expert in climate, peace and security programming, Geneva, Switzerland, 27 June 2024 (Interview #159).
- 16 This observation was true in the sample examined and more broadly. PBF staff that monitor climate-related projects observed that most of these projects end up involving youth substantially as beneficiaries, even where they are not designed as a "youth-focused" project. Interview with PBSO staff, Microsoft Teams, 9 January 2024 (Interview #1).
- 17 For example, although the project [PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad was not explicitly a youth-focused project, the final evaluation found that 60 per cent of the beneficiaries were young people. See evaluation for Chad, p. 30.
- 18 Ibid., p. 6.
- 19 Interview with climate-security advisor, Microsoft Teams, 26 September 2024 (Interview #166).
- 20 Interview with implementing partner, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 23 August 2024 (Interview #158); Interview with implementing partner, Geneva, Switzerland, 27 June 2024 (Interview #159). This project was also not part of the original sample of projects for this Review because in its project documentation it was not clearly focused on youth. It came to the attention of the research team later in interviews, and was included to provide an example of how these issues emerge organically in many settings.
- 21 Interview with implementing partner, Geneva, Switzerland, 27 June 2024 (Interview #159).
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Interview with implementing partner, Microsoft Teams, 10 September 2024 (Interview #160).
- 24 Interview with African Union representative, WhatsApp, 13 August 2024 (Interview #167). See also Interview with United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel representative, Microsoft Teams, 1 August 2024 (Interview #165).
- 25 Interview with African Union representative, WhatsApp, 13 August 2024 (Interview #167).
- 26 No significant examples of youth engagement and involvement at the project design and inception stage were cited in any of the interviews for projects in cohort 4, although this may have taken place without being documented or identified as such.
- 27 Interview with implementing partner, Banjul, The Gambia, 20 June 2024 (Interview #153). Although environmental issues were a major focus, there were some activities not primarily related to this, such as video screenings on conflict prevention themes or other broader dialogues.
- 28 Interview with implementing partner, Banjul, The Gambia, 18 June 2024 (Interview #152).



- 29 Examples of some of these results are provided in the evaluation for the project in The Gambia ([PBF/GMB/B-2](#)), pp. 36–39.
- 30 Evaluation for the project in The Gambia ([PBF/GMB/B-2](#)), pp. 31–32.
- 31 Interview with implementing partner, Banjul, The Gambia, 18 June 2024 (Interview #152).
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Focus group discussion with community members, Sambang, The Gambia, 22 June 2024 (Interview #154).
- 34 One implementing partner shared two types of tensions observed: a lack of livelihoods and food sources among the displaced populations, as they no longer had land available to grow cocoa for export or their own food products; and for the host populations, increased strain on water resources and public services, due to the influx of people: “If before we had a water pump for 1,000 inhabitants ... this same pump must be used by more than 5,000 inhabitants.” Interview with UN staff member, Microsoft Teams, 13 May 2024 (Interview #137).
- 35 Evaluation for the project [PBF/IRF-259](#) in Côte d’Ivoire, pp. 19, 27.
- 36 These themes of countering or preventing engagement in violent extremism or other forms of criminality came out in many of the interviews and ProDocs for these projects. For example, in the project [PBF/IRF-304](#) in CAR the rationale for involving youth in the project (both young women and young men) was that “[y]outh is vulnerable to indoctrination and can therefore be drawn into insecurity”. Interview with UN staff member involved in implementation, Bangui, CAR, 7 February 2024 (Interview #135). The context surrounding the project [PBF/IRF-435](#) in Honduras was that Indigenous youth had long been involved in land conflict and violent protests, and were viewed as more susceptible to being recruited by criminal groups because of their economic disenfranchisement and exclusion. This was also viewed as a key driver of migration.
- 37 To give one illustration, the evaluation of the project [PBF/TCD/A-1](#) in Chad (which combined a focus on community dispute resolution and dialogue with “hard” inputs such as replenishing water sources and training to 2,000+ individuals in sustainable agriculture) found that the activities allowed “74.9% of beneficiaries to meet their food requirements, 59% to cover health needs, 43.31% to meet clothing needs and 39.12% to guarantee educational needs.” Evaluation for Chad, p. 6, 17.
- 38 Evaluation for the project in Chad ([PBF/TCD/A-1](#)), pp. 6, 17.
- 39 Ibid., p. 6.
- 40 Interview with UN staff member involved in implementation, Bangui, CAR, 7 February 2024 (Interview #135).
- 41 This was a particular lesson learned from the case study of Yemen in the 2023 Thematic Review, with entry points created for greater women’s inclusion because of the way that communities welcomed the project. See Erica Gaston and others, *Climate-Security and Peacebuilding Thematic Review* (New York, United Nations University, 2023), pp. 33–37, 53–55.
- 42 Evaluation for the project in CAR ([PBF/IRF-304](#)), p. 56.
- 43 Interview with two implementing partners, Banjul, the Gambia, 20 June 2024 (Interview #153).
- 44 Evaluation for the project in Chad ([PBF/TCD/A-1](#)), p. 6.
- 45 ProDoc for the project in Somalia ([PBF/IRF-433](#)), pp. 10–13; Interview with UN staff member, Microsoft Teams, 3 June 2024 (Interview #48).
- 46 Interview with UN staff member, Microsoft Teams, 3 June 2024 (Interview #48). Interview with two staff members of implementing partner, Microsoft Teams, 21 June 2024 (Interview #50).
- 47 Interview with UN staff member, Microsoft Teams, 3 June 2024 (Interview #48).
- 48 Interview with two staff members of implementing partner, Microsoft Teams, 21 June 2024 (Interview #50).
- 49 Interview with implementing partners, Microsoft Teams, 21 June 2024 (Interview #150).
- 50 Interview with implementing partner, Microsoft Teams, 25 September 2024 (Interview #162).
- 51 Interview with implementing partners, Microsoft Teams, 12 February 2024 (Interview #12).
- 52 Interview with Yemeni youth activist, Whatsapp, 12 July 2024 (Interview #168).
- 53 Ibid.