

CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT AND MIGRATION

NEXUS REGIONAL STUDY - SUDAN
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 2022



CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT, AND MIGRATION

IOM has spent the last ten months conducting a study to **increase the evidence base on the climate change, conflict, and migration nexus in Sudan**. This effort was funded by the IOM Development Fund and occurred within the framework of the institution's strategy for Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (MECC) out of the Cairo Regional Office. Furthermore, the objectives and outcomes of this study align with Sudan's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and with the support of the Higher Council for Environment & Natural Resources (NCENR). The study also falls within the Government of Sudan's implementation plan of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), as mentioned in the National Review of the Republic of Sudan, contributing towards the following objectives: Objectives 1 (Data), 2 (adverse drivers), and 7 (reduce vulnerabilities).

IOM collected data from five communities and cities in Sudan in the second half of 2022: Melit, North Darfur; Nyala, South Darfur; Nahr Atbara, Kassala; Basunda, Gedaref; and Khartoum. Five methodologies were employed: 1) semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, 2) semi-structured interviews with community members; 3) ethnographic walks with community leaders across various demographic groups and interests; 4) focus group discussions with community leaders who engage in collective problem solving; and 5) quantitative surveys on livelihood and human mobility decisions from a representative sample in each community. The present summary presents the framework used to analyse the qualitative data based on an extensive Desk Review conducted in the first phase of the study (**Figure 1**, on the next page). **The below sections elaborate on how the key study dynamics catalyse or exacerbate existing structural weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and societal challenges.** Additionally, they illustrate how each of the study's dynamics is inextricably linked to one another, demonstrating the need for a concerted, cross-sector response.

Stakeholders and community members identified the following as **key consequences of environmental degradation**, including anthropogenic, non-anthropogenic, and climate change factors (listed in order of frequency mentioned):

1. Fewer or otherwise altered harvests (including from blight and water supply irregularities – drought, flood)
2. Destruction of housing
3. Loss of livestock (including from disease and destruction/reduction of pastoral lands)
4. Health concerns (disease and illness related to unsafe drinking water and insufficient food supply)
5. Issues with transportation and access to markets

"When the rain happens, we move... In 2019, houses collapsed, and livestock died. Some drowned; others had houses collapse on top of them." - *Community Member*



"Last year, there was little rain, and everything suffered. However, this year the water was really heavy. The extra rain is not good for cotton because you can't go to maintain the plants." - *Community Member*



Respondents named the following **structural constraints** as limiting adaptive capabilities, resilience, and conflict resolution mechanisms:



"There are an increasing number of women's farmer associations, but they need to be supported. [The women] can't be loaned money or given heavy machinery, and this huge resource of associations we have is losing its momentum." - *Community Member*



"The main challenges to sustainable programming are that we don't have a budget; we have no capacity for skills development, a lack of equipment and no access to the things we need." - *Community Member*

1. Inability to access financial markets/sustainable livelihoods
2. Ongoing organised violence
3. Lack of sustainability in development and stabilisation projects
4. Absence of basic transportation routes, vehicles, and access issues
5. Ineffective water management and treatment services

The **compounding effects of environmental degradation, various forms of migration, armed conflict** and other forms of physical insecurity manifested most frequently in the following ways:

1. Amplification of existing vulnerabilities
2. Disproportionate effects on women, children, and the elderly
3. Insufficient action from the public sector resulting from bureaucratic complications and political volatility
4. Lag between early warning systems and responses
5. Increasing strain on infrastructure, including those managing access to basic services

"The rains have heavily affected the Internally Displaced Persons camps. We need mosquito nets, and all of the houses have collapsed." - *Community Member*



"In some areas, competitions over the water, agricultural land and grazing land resources lead to migration and conflicts." - *Community Member*



"[After being displaced due to violent conflict] 'the attackers met us along the way and stripped us of our clothes and money. Some girls were raped.'" - *Community Member*



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



Environmental degradation represents sequences of adverse events like frequent floods, soil erosion and the subsequent reduction of land for agriculture and livestock. It occurs from a confluence of factors: anthropogenic (e.g., deforestation), non-anthropogenic (e.g., extreme weather events), and climate change (e.g., increasingly unpredictable rainfall patterns). Priority elements of environmental concern that impact the daily lives of respondents include the following (in order of frequency of mention):

1. Changes/unpredictability in rainfall patterns
2. Flooding
3. Drought
4. Anthropogenic factors (e.g., deforestation leading to desertification)
5. Greater temperature variability

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The effects of environmental degradation are moderated and amplified by the structural context of a given location and, closely related to this, the human capacity to cope with and adapt to such risks at different levels. In this dynamic, environmental degradation directly interacts with the structural context (e. g. political stability), while resilience and adaptive capacities may alleviate the negative impacts of environmental degradation. Respondents identified the following key structural vulnerabilities and adaptive challenges in the face of environmental degradation factors:

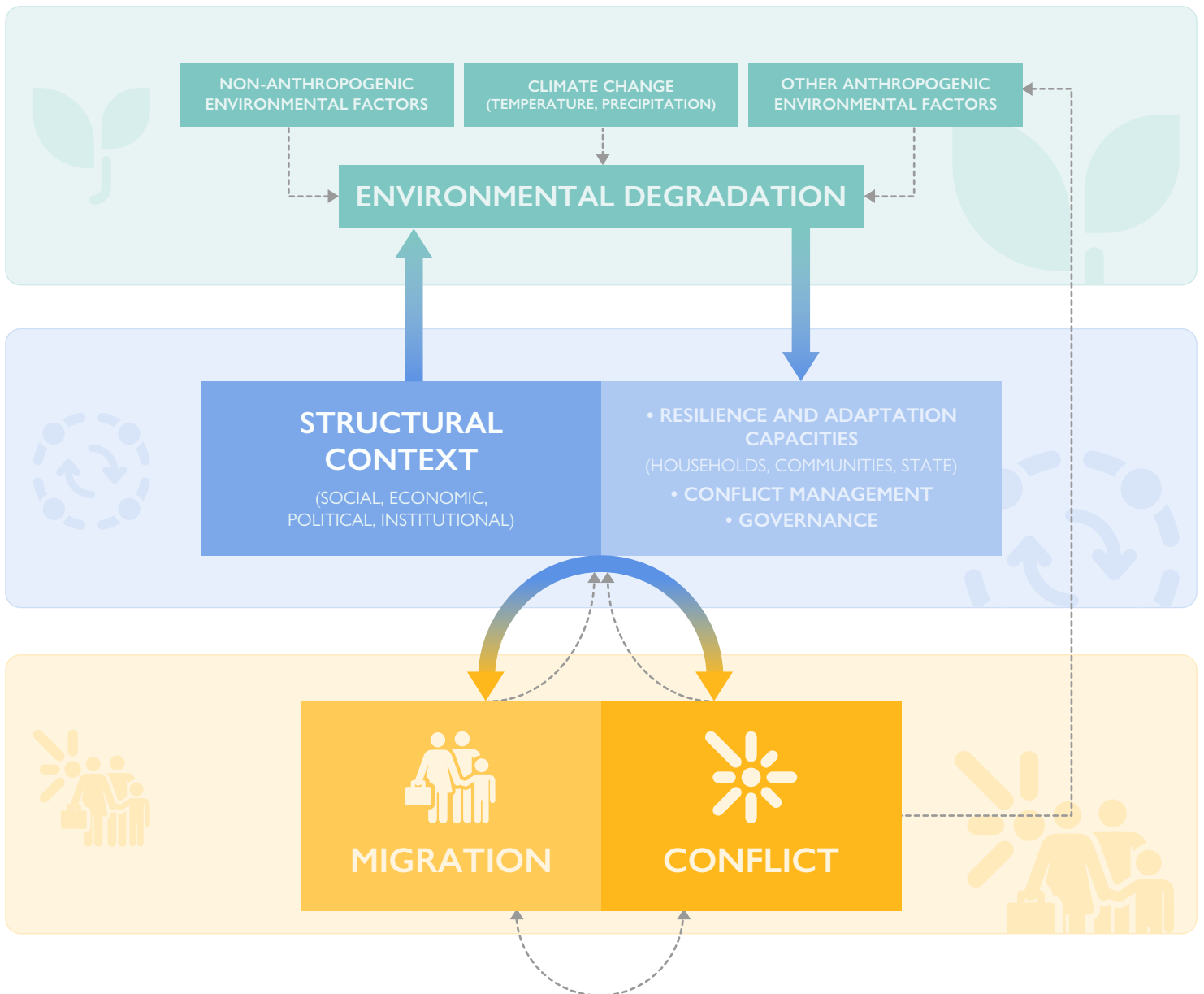
1. Access to water, food, and essential public services
2. Access to healthcare and health issues related to environmental degradation
3. Access to education (destruction of infrastructure, lack of teachers)
4. Physical insecurity (violence, inter-communal tensions)
5. Availability and sustainability of housing structures



Conflict and unplanned migration are triggered or exacerbated in unstable contexts where human resilience and adaptive capacities are insufficient to deal with the consequences of environmental degradation. Simultaneously, conflict and migration alter the structural contexts in which they are embedded and influence household, community and government resilience by both straining and enhancing their crisis management and adaptive capacities. Respondents named the following as primary catalysts of unplanned migration:

1. Armed conflict
2. Pursuit of improved livelihood options
3. Education opportunities
4. Environmental degradation (including extreme weather events)
5. Family

▪ FIGURE 1: CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT, AND MIGRATION (CCM) STUDY - SUDAN SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ▪





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